

IDENTIFYING THE PAIN: MOVING  
THE WOUNDED TO  
WHOLENESS

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B.A., South Carolina State College, 1984  
M.Div., Virginia Union University, 2003

Mentor

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A FINAL PROJECT SUBMITTED TO  
THE DOCTORAL STUDIES COMMITTEE  
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS  
FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

UNITED THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY  
DAYTON, OHIO  
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**Faculty Approval Page  
Doctor of Ministry Final Project**

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**ABSTRACT**  
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This project addresses the problem of empowering Christians to seek God throughout the process of overcoming their pain, whether they are clergy or laity. A quantitative and a qualitative methodology were used to evaluate and test participants' pain experience. This project revealed the ongoing need for assistance to individuals in identifying the pain experience with a focus of wholeness. The sufferer who seeks God in the midst of pain and affliction, through His son, Jesus Christ, the manifestation of healing is initiated with the necessary guidance. When preaching, counseling, teaching, and sharing of pain is directed properly, wholeness is fostered.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The researcher wishes to thank God for making this day possible. He expresses his heartfelt gratitude and appreciation to his Pastor, Dr. Leonard N. Smith, for providing the encouragement, opportunity, and resources to attend school. He would like to acknowledge his mentor, Dr. Alfred L. Thompson, for without his guidance, wisdom, and expertise, this project would not have been completed. The researcher also wishes to express gratitude to his context group participants: thank you for your on-going support. To Dr. Kenneth B. Ballard, Rubi Canonizado, and Reverend Cassandra Tate: thank you for your valuable feedback, prayers and many contributions to this project. Special thanks to the researcher's peer group for all of the positive reinforcement. The researcher expresses much gratitude to his lovely wife, Cynthia Lousie Campbell and their three daughters (Machaela Renee, Rachel Nicole, and Tiffany Gabriella) for their unconditional love, understanding, and support throughout this process.

## DEDICATION

To individuals who have experienced personal pain, know that God's desire is for you to receive and abide in wholeness and live a fulfilled, satisfied, and balance life. Be encouraged to know that God will hear and answer your cry. *Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know* (Jeremiah 33:3).

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## INTRODUCTION

An individual's Christian faith is often shaped by their personal pain stories; their experiences; and how they have responded when painful wounds surface in their lives. As there are several types of pain, ranging from emotional distress, to physical discomfort, the existence of hurt appears to be a real part of our lives. Regardless of how we have grown to handle it, the fact remains that we will continue to experience these uncomfortable sensations. This pain, however, was experienced by Jesus as well. Even Mary, his mother, experienced pain in another way, enduring the anguish of witnessing her son being executed. The saints also experienced pain in their lives, as pain appeared to be an integral element of life through the Biblical examples of physical suffering, persecution, and even death.

It is possible for pain to be absent at times, but it is equally important to know that trouble will rear its ugly head again in the near future. Regardless of social diversities, i.e.: gender, age, race, or ethnicity, pain afflicts all. The irony concerning pain is that it contains a unifying feature such that the emotional or physical results of it are able to bring people together who suffer the same troubles. Although everyone desires a painless society, the fact of the matter is, we live in a dying world where human suffering is a common occurrence. Pain, suffering, and decay are all direct results of sin. As long as there is sin in the world, there will be heartache and disappointments.

This writer will present a transformative ministry model of biblical truth addressing individual experiences influenced by pain, and resulting in critically wounded persons who are also members of Mount Zion Baptist Church. This area of ministry was chosen because of the writer's personal experiences with hurt, economic hardship, and brokenness during his lifetime. It was during the writer's challenges with pain that directed his spiritual steps and created compassion within him to do ministry. Through this journey, the writer has come to know and experience God's liberating power move beyond debilitating fates in life, while transforming lives into ready vessels and willing instruments for pointing others to God.

Through a relationship with Christ, the researcher has both learned, and been empowered to minister to those: broken hearted; seeking spiritual understanding; feeling alienated; homesteading in a place completely different from the environment of their genesis; fatherless; experiencing economic challenges; emotionally distraught; and experiencing mental anguish. Due to these most disturbing, yet real issues, the writer has decided to focus his research to create a ministry model that will assist all Christians whether, clergy or laity, to find God in the midst of their pain. It is the writer's hope that this ministry model will motivate Christians to come out on the other side of their pain as whole individuals.

The writer wishes to accomplish this through training sessions and sermons, with emphasis in knowing the biblical truth concerning how God hears our cries and loves us through our pain. Through expository preaching and teaching, the researcher envisions ministering to the whole person: involving transformation that begins with the process of renewing the mind. The mind is renewed as it receives new spiritual information from the

Word of God. This spiritual information puts individuals in right relationship with God, which will also place individuals in right relationship with themselves and others. Therefore allowing both spiritual and mental portals to open and receive Biblical Truth that is processed through their minds.

In chapter one, the writer elaborates upon the area of ministry this model addresses pertaining to painful life experiences and wounded conditions. It also explains why the writer was drawn to this particular area of ministry to explore, while eliminating the special insights and experiences the writer brings to the ministry. Furthermore, chapter one discusses the unique characteristics of the local context group, and explain why they were selected for this model.

Chapter two is a comprehensive aggregate of writings pertaining to the subject and the model. The writer introduces several experts in the subject area, and correlates their respective works to his own study. This chapter allows the writer to examine recent studies, reports, and a myriad of literature addressing the model. The writer presents several approaches that other cultures and religions have taken to address pain within their particular groups.

In chapter three, the writer draws from an exhaustive biblical, historical, and theological research process to formulate and develop a theoretical foundation of his own to address the subject of pain and wounded conditions. The writer incorporates both the Old and New Testament Scriptures to present historical facts and Biblical insights on how one can respond to personal pains. While presenting theological commentary, Biblical scholars further this discussion with other perspectives to undergird this study.



In chapter four, the writers will elaborate on how the ministry model will be tested. This study's hypothesis states that: individuals who have gone through painful life experiences are able to convert brokenness into wholeness after attending or participating in the writer's ministry model. The intervention tested in this study is titled "Transformative Ministry Program." This program model was formulated by the writer to assist Christian clergy and laity in finding God during their own painful experiences. The writer wishes that the Christian be free as a whole individual and will allow God to use them in a transformative ministry of healing others of those who are going through painful life experiences in church settings. Furthermore, the writer explains that both qualitative and quantitative methods will be employed to evaluate the effectiveness of his ministry model.

In Chapter five, the writer evaluates the effectiveness of his field work, identifies trends, and expounds upon what actually happened during the implementation of his model. This chapter presents the data collected, utilizing the data gathering procedure discussed in chapter four. For purpose of structuring presentation, data was entered in tables, analyzed, and interpreted.

In Chapter six, the writer provides his reflections, summations, and recommendations for the study and ministry model. Additionally, he expounds on his finding from the study and gives theological insight and awareness on how impactful this study was.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **MINISTRY FOCUS**

This ministry model addresses the various facets and intricacies of personal pain. The model further identifies the individual experiences in life that move a person into a place of positive wholeness. By reflecting on his past, the writer is better able to assess his present challenge of helping others overcome the hurting issues daily facing them. This portion of the project affords the writer the opportunity to divulge his past experiences relative to his current mission and ministry focus.

The writer has learned to experience life from a spiritual perspective. The researcher, an African-American male, and the youngest of five children, grew up in the small rural town of Round-O, South Carolina. Round-O is forty five miles South East of Charleston. In September 1961, while the researcher was still in his mother's womb, his father was accidentally killed on the job logging wood. The researcher's father left behind a wife, two sons, two daughters, and an unborn child. As a result of God's divine plan for the researcher's life, he was born into the world in April of 1962, with negative strikes against him and his mother.

Not only did his dear mother have an awesome burden of caring for him as a newborn baby, but she also had a great responsibility of caring for his other four siblings while enduring the painful loss of her husband. It was during that time when the researcher understood the harsh realities of sorrow, true grief, and the uncertainties of

life. Although the researcher was young, he quickly became acquainted with pain as he observed its effects around him on a continuous basis. It was then, at the tender age of 6, that the researcher knew God would ultimately use his childhood experience for His glory. The researcher's mother taught him to honor and reverence God, even in the face of adversity. With God on her side, the researcher's mother placed her hand in God's hand and molded him into the God-fearing man that he is today.

There were a few mentors in the researcher's life that helped guide him in his pursuit of becoming a member of the clergy. A few of those most influential mentors include the late Earnest Bodison, who was a very stern man who kept him deeply rooted in God's Word; and the Reverend Duane C. Tisdale, who still is an intricate part of the researcher's life as he continues to council and pray for him. As a result of the strength acquired from his mother and mentors, the researcher has learned to focus on God and seek His face upon each occurrence of pain, hurt, and disappointment.

After twenty years of serving in the military, and three years of continued service as the Minister of Administration, the researcher was led to work on his doctoral degree in ministry. As the Minister of Administration, the researcher serves the Mount Zion Baptist Church, located in Arlington, Virginia. Mount Zion Baptist Church is located in the Nauck Community of Arlington Virginia. This church has a very rich history and is a national historic landmark.

Mount Zion's church's history dates back to the late 1800's. "The Church has an affluent heritage that its members can be proud to claim. Mount Zion has the distinction of being the oldest Black church in Arlington County, and is one of the County's largest,

in-terms of seating capacity.”<sup>1</sup> According to the *2002 Church Annual Report*,<sup>2</sup> September 1986 was the day in which the official county marker was placed at the front of the Church attesting to its historical significance. Currently, Mount Zion has over 3,000 members, 14 associate ministers, and 35 ministries in order to serve the spiritual needs of its members and the community. Mount Zion Baptist Church has had 9 pastors in 145 years of serving the people and community.

After the close of the great Civil War, a number of Christians gathered together and began a Baptist Church in Freedmen’s Village, now a part of the Arlington National Cemetery. They named their new place of worship: “The Old Bell Church.” When the federal government needed land to expand burial grounds for the bodies of Union soldiers, they moved the residents of Freedman’s Village, originally called “The Old Bell Church.” Five of Arlington’s oldest churches Mount Zion Baptist Church (originally named the Old Bell Church), Mount Olive Baptist Church, Lomax A.M.E. Zion Church, Macedonia Baptist Church, and St. John’s Baptist Church all originated from the Freedmen’s Village congregation.

When the government moved the people from the reservation, they settled in nearby Alexandria County, now called Arlington, Virginia. In September 1866, another building was purchased on Mount Vernon Avenue which is located in Arlington, Virginia and later named Arlington Ridge Road. Here a new church was erected and re-named Mount Zion Baptist Church. This was a two story red brick building with a white marble front. They worshiped there under the leadership of their first Pastor, Reverend Robert S. Laws, who led the congregation successfully for an unknown numbers of years.

Written documents propose that in 1904, Reverend A.G. Gordon became pastor. His tenure ended unexpectedly in 1906 due to an injury in an automobile accident. Reverend F. W. Graham accepted the call to pastor in 1908. Unfortunately, the church was only able to experience his leadership for a short period of time. The church encountered a sudden loss due to the passing of Reverend F. W. Graham. He passed away in 1912 after just four years of service.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Dr. Leonard N. Smith, *2002 Church Annual Report* (Arlington, VA: Mount Zion Baptist Church, 2002), 53.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 54.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 50-51.

According to the historical information gathered from the Mount Zion Baptist Church, “in 1914, the Reverend James E. Green was called to become the sixth pastor of the Mount Zion Baptist Church. He was a dynamic leader in both the church and community. In 1930, a new church was erected at a cost of \$26,000.00. The Church was built at the Arlington Ridge Road site (formerly known as Mount Vernon Avenue).”<sup>4</sup> The church 2002 Annual Report further describes that the federal government condemned their property in 1942 to make way for a network of roads.

After two-years of patiently waiting, yet persistently preparing for their next move, the congregation purchased property at 19<sup>th</sup> and Lowell Streets in the Nauck Community. Ground breaking services were held at 19<sup>th</sup> and South Lowell Streets on Easter Sunday April 9, 1944. On Sunday, July 9, 1944 the corner stone was laid. On Sunday, July 1, 1945, the first service was held in Mount Zion.

Under the pastoral direction of Reverend Green, the current church was purchased. Pastor Green instituted a plan to eliminate the church’s mortgage of \$70,709.32. In December 1949, that goal was met, and the mortgage was paid in full. A mortgage burning ceremony was held to celebrate the accomplishments of the body of Christ. Reverend Green served as Pastor for 36 years. During those years, the church grew spiritually, financially, and physically. His faithful service left an inefaceable mark in the history of the Mount Zion Baptist Church. His dedication and commitment will always be remembered.

Dr. Oswald G. Smith accepted the call to the pastorate at Mount Zion Baptist Church in January 1952. The numerous accomplishments of Mount Zion under his leadership demonstrated Dr. Smith’s ability to foster Christian fellowship and advance the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Dr. Smith established a ministry that spiritually and physically nurtured the Nauck Community. Under Dr. Smith’s leadership, he initiated the Deacon’s Fund to serve the church and those in need in the community. Dr. Smith also developed an educational guild to provide Christian education training for future leaders. Additionally, Dr. Smith founded the Edmond C. Fleet Scholarship Fund that offered educational scholarships and added an educational annex. The church’s educational annex was built onto the existing church on November 1957. Dr. Smith retired from the pastorate in 1991. After a long illness, he was laid to rest on November 19, 1997.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 52.

In November 1991, Dr. Leonard N. Smith was called to serve and was installed as the ninth Senior Minister of the Mount Zion Baptist Church in March 1992. Under Dr. Leonard Smith's leadership, Mount Zion's membership has rapidly grown. As Mount Zion was transitioning, Arlington, Virginia was also undergoing a change in its population.

According to the 2010 census, Arlington County's population grew from 170,936 in 1990 to 189,453 in 2010, an increase of 10.8 percent. In 2000, about 69 percent of Arlington County's population was white and nearly one-fifth of Arlington's residents were Hispanic (18.6%); the black or African-American population comprised 9.3% percent of Arlington County. The 2010 census further reports that out all of the Metropolitan Washington, D.C., jurisdictions Arlington County has a much higher proportion of residents with Bachelor's degrees, compared with the national average. Arlington County's residents are among the best educated in the nation.<sup>6</sup>

The challenge the researcher now faces in his context is maximizing his gifting and experience full ministry expression which means an avenue must be made available for the researcher's to lead a ministry platform that is free of restraints and confinements. The researcher's academic matriculation along with his military leadership, maturity and experienced has aided in his preparation emotionally and mentally so that he is adaptable in any type of environment and setting.

The researcher's military experience has given him the opportunity to work closely with Chaplains on Different Military Installations. While deployed in 1999, the researcher served in Kuwait as the Pastor for the Camp Doha Gospel Service where service members and Department of Defense (DOD) civilians had an opportunity to

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 53.

<sup>6</sup> Arlington Virginia, "Arlington County and the Region" ([http://www.arlingtonva.us/departments/cphd/planning/data\\_maps/Census/region/CensusRegionRegionalComparisons.aspx](http://www.arlingtonva.us/departments/cphd/planning/data_maps/Census/region/CensusRegionRegionalComparisons.aspx)), accessed 09/27/2012.

experience worship in a ministry context that they were familiar with back home. The Installation Commander in consultation with the Installation Chaplain granted the researcher with this opportunity because of there was an unmet need identified within the command. Additionally, while serving Afghanistan in 2003 and stationed at Bagram Air Force Base, the writer worked closely with the Installation Chaplain and was frequently placed on the preaching rotation. He also supported the Installation Chaplain Assistant each week by conducting Bible study classes for a deployed Battalion.

The military forces commitment and challenge of being engaged in two wars creates a strain on family member's and the Chaplains Branch that supports the deployed units and their family and creates an opportunity for community clergy leaders to assist in providing ministry to military families. This challenge suggests to the researcher that there is an opportunity for ministry to service members, their family, and Department of Defense Personnel who work on and support these commands that can be abridge by having a ministering team that works with the Installations Chaplains Office and provide ministry to service members.

The military Installations in the National Capital Region provide a readily available Multicultural environment that can serve as a test bed for a ministry model in Multicultural Communication and Leadership in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. The diversity, discipline, and education existing on these installations represent the best of the Nation. The researcher will seek to capitalize on ministry opportunities by engaging and partnering with the Military Installations Chaplains Office to become familiar with and identify unmet ministry needs to take advantage of the ministry opportunities offered by these communities. The researcher will seek to expand upon his relationship with the

military community and utilize resources on the installation to reach the target audience by coordinating with the Chaplains Office to communicate what's provided by the ministry model to the tenant organization on the installations. Based on the result of the study, the researcher intends to launch an advertisement campaign by publishing ministry information in the Installation News Papers, coordinating the webmaster and advertising classes, posting fliers at the commissary and Post Exchanges and other areas frequented by service members. The researcher will accomplish this task by availing himself to provide a spiritually enriching Bible Study Course, Relationship Seminars for Married and Singles Service Members at Bolling Air Force Base, Fort Belvoir, Fort McNair, Fort Myers and Quantico Marine Corps Base. The writer believes that once a relationship is secured within these communities then the ministry can be duplicated and implemented on other military installation.

The researcher also seeks to engage the surrounding communities and governmental agencies to learn of programs and resources offered by these organizations that can benefit the faith community. In addition, the writer seeks to partner with Universities and Colleges on these installations and possibly utilize their platform to offer special classes. The researcher seeks to assist in equipping the target audience with the spiritual and life skills required for living a fulfilled, satisfied and balanced life through teaching, preaching, and coaching. The multicultural context consist of individuals of all races and from various backgrounds coming together centered on the commonality of seeking advancement, striving for achievement, and a sense of service to country and community.



This ministry model is fueled by the researchers own military experience and exposure, his passion to minister and meet the needs of others, and especially to those who will go in harm's way. Due to his own experience with uncertainty, loneliness, separation from family and love ones, and the hardships endured as a result from many deployments, the writer is drawn to present a transformative ministry model, to address some of the life needs of service members. The researcher intends to coordinate with the Chaplains Office and outline a propose activity calendar so service members who are interested in participating in the ministry can obtain information and plan their calendars appropriately. This will be a collaborative effort involving multiply organizations in the faith community.

The use of technology such as the Internet, Facebook, and Twitter will empower individuals to remain connected with the ministry model and aid in their spiritual enrichment. Additionally, they will be able to access recommend book readings and daily inspirational quotes. Online surveys can be used as a form for individuals to articulate their specific concerns and to assess then introduce and implement new ministry ideas. All of these resources will be used to assist in the development of individuals' spiritual growth and empower then to move toward Christian maturity.

The ministry model must speak to the needs of a young, bright, discipline, and energetic population while at the same time realizing that there will be a constant population shift. The writer will be proactive and insightful in proclaiming that the Word of God and His teachings must be paramount in the life of the believer. Additionally, the writer will address the biblical relevance of money and economic empowerment to individuals, the church and our communities. The ministry must have the potential and

capacity to speak to the economic, social, spiritual, political, emotional and physical forces, and voices impacting the believers. It must address the importance of saving, investing and becoming debt free and economically solid. This will also be accomplished through a collaborative effort with agencies having the technical and professional instruments.

The researcher will be deliberate in speaking specifically to the spiritual, mental, physical, economical and social needs of service members by developing Bible Study and Course Material to expand ones knowledge base and understanding in these areas. The ministry model will be directly impacted by insightful teaching, preaching, and practical experience that the writer has gained in life and in ministry. The breadth of my exposure and experiences can best be served where teaching and preaching is paramount and where believes strongly are seeking the move of the Holy Spirit in their life.

The church should strive to economically free the hands of believers so they can make a great contribution and impact in the Body of Christ. This impact can subsequently result in a greater spreading of the Gospel of Christ. Having well-lit Christians in a dark world will only bring glory to the Father. “In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.”<sup>7</sup>

The writer’s desire is to formulate a model for ministry that helps individuals to matriculate through life with greater spiritual preparedness. The researcher seeks to encourage and inspire this generation to have greater expectations in life, to expand their focus from simply seeking good employment and careers but for business ownership, who are lead by the Holy Spirit and who realize the importance of being imaginative.

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<sup>7</sup> *The Holy Bible: New International Version* (International Bible Society: Zondervan Publishing House, 1973, 1978, 1984), Matthew 5:16.

Through the process of maturing in the faith, the writer has discovered that there are particular episodes in his life that points to the fact that God will do a new thing in the life of those who are willing and available for His use and purpose.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **STATE OF THE ART IN THIS MINISTRY MODEL**

This chapter discusses in detail the literary works relevant to past research, commentary, and precedent focused in the ministerial reproach to pain. Several great works have been included in this study to further enhance the writer's grasp of information available for a more cohesive ministry model. While gathering several literary works relevant to pain and the various Christian ways of dealing with it, the writer noticed the wide range of scholarly perspective. Some literary contributors have noted pain to be a very necessary aspect of the Christian life and without it, there can be no true fellowship with Christ; while there are others who contend that pain is an agent of evil, a byproduct of the enemy's agenda. These two very extreme approaches to the subject are also balanced by others who are able to weigh both extreme opposite approaches to Christian suffering, and provide even more thoughtful debate on the subject. The writer is most concerned with integrating as many of these different approaches to the subject in order to effectively develop a more refined model for the church as a whole.

To begin this study, however, the writer has purposed to start his research with foundational information from the Biblical perspective. The Bible continues to provide every believer with examples of righteous behaviors. Outcomes and behaviors in response to pain should point to a more diligent Christian disciple with a stronger victorious testimony. This Christian perspective can be depicted through the testimony of

Job in the Old Testament. “The book of Job is a training manual for how to deal with trails, pain and suffering.”<sup>1</sup>

One of the most significant contributors of this in-depth look into the story of Job is Richard Rohr in his book, *Job and the Mystery of Suffering: Spiritual Reflections*.<sup>2</sup> This book is most intriguing as it discusses the sufferings of Job and looks into the pain that he endured as a growth process. This writer legitimizes pain as a learning tool that God uses to strengthen His children. Another noteworthy writer, William Green, has commented on the many sides of Job’s agony in his book, *The Book of Job Unfolded*.<sup>3</sup> In this book, Green engages his readers to consider Job’s piety and self-righteousness prior to his divinely orchestrated encounter with pain. Green also suggests that Job’s example is one that the world-at-large should model after, as there should be an awareness of sufferings to follow after there is an experience of wealth and prosperity. In addition, the writer of this project has also benefited from the writings of Greg Garrett in his book, *Stories from the Edge: A Theology of Grief*.<sup>4</sup> Garrett’s book makes mention of Job’s tremendous loss serving as a reminder of the stewardship mandate that humans should always possess. To think that we, as Christians, are owners of things and other people, is what the author suggests keeps devastation and despair as a constant whenever losses occur.

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<sup>1</sup> Kathy Pride, *What The Bible Is All About For Moms: God’s Loving Promises For You and Your Family* (Ventura, CA: Regal, 2010), 70.

<sup>2</sup> Richard Rohr, *Job and the Mystery of Suffering: Spiritual Reflections* (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1996).

<sup>3</sup> William Henry Green, *The Book of Job Unfolded* (Arlington Heights, IL: Christian Liberty Press, 1996).

<sup>4</sup> Greg Garrett, *Stories from the Edge: A Theology of Grief* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2008).

The writer also analyses the piercing witness of the Apostle Paul in the New Testament. “Any study of the life of the apostle Paul requires a serious look at the subject of pain.”<sup>5</sup> One of the great minds of today, Kirk Neely, in his book, *When Grief Comes: Finding Strength for Today and Hope for Tomorrow*,<sup>6</sup> references the Apostle Paul as the foremost example of victory during hardship. Neely offers the idea that one’s survival of suffering, like the Apostle Paul’s example, is evidence of maturity. His dissect of the life of Paul is helpful as Neely analyses the outcomes of Paul’s endurance and signifies hope as the most useful method toward a blessed end. Another brilliant commentary on the exposition of Paul comes from Bob Dowell in his book: *Understanding the Bible*.<sup>7</sup> Dowell emphasizes Paul’s experience with suffering as similar to Jesus’ triumph at the cross. Dowell’s comparative study between Paul and Jesus has helped the writer become familiar with the inevitable suffering that every believer must endure for the sake of the Kingdom. To further enhance the discussion of Paul and his suffering, Udo Schnelle does a great job with capturing the “Apostle’s Integrity” in his book, *Apostle Paul: His Life and Theology*.<sup>8</sup> This book vividly describes the importance of Paul’s suffering as a direct indication of the pureness of his message. The author suggests that Paul’s witness to the world is effective because of his endurance through painful experiences.

From these Bible characters, who help shape the Biblical foundation of the project, the writer is able to launch into other areas of relative study. One of the most

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<sup>5</sup>Charles R. Swindoll, *Paul: A Man of Grace and Grit* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2002), 7.1.

<sup>6</sup> Kirk H. Neely, *When Grief Comes: Finding Strength for Today and Hope for Tomorrow* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2007).

<sup>7</sup> Bob Dowell, *Understanding the Bible Head and Heart: Part Three—Romans Through Revelation* (Bloomington, IN: WestBow Press, 2012).

<sup>8</sup> Udo Schnelle, *Apostle Paul: His Life and Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing Group, 2005).

profound elements to consider in both Biblical characters is the source of their respective pain. “Paul may be portrayed as a New Testament example of Job-like suffering, but neither Job nor Paul compels us to conclude that God is the efficient cause behind every one of life’s situations, the evil as well as the good.”<sup>9</sup> The question of whether or not their pain was inflicted to them by God Himself is brought out by this foundational study. To deepen this discussion of where the source of pain comes, Lynn Gardner’s book, *Where is God When We Suffer?*<sup>10</sup>, points the reader to the evils of sin. Gardner proposes that original sin and the fall of man is the direct link to the pain and suffering human’s experience. Although Gardner points to rebellion and the workings of evil as the source of pain, Ariel Gluckich in *Dying for Heaven*<sup>11</sup>, argues the mystic’s position that “God is just as often the source of pain and suffering.” These opposing opinions help to further support the research of this project as it relates to the source of pain.

Another interesting component that is further explored in this study stems from the fact that both Bible characters, Job and Paul, confronted God concerning their pain in their own unique way. In Norman Habel’s, *The Book of Job*<sup>12</sup>, he shares Job’s method of questioning God as a model of what not to do. Habel explores Job’s confrontation as an arrogant attempt to circumvent his suffering. Paul’s method of questioning God, however, is seen as an act of humility. Lloyd John Ogilvie in his book, *Asking God Your*

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<sup>9</sup> David Crump, *Knocking on Heaven’s Door: A New Testament Theology of Petitionary Prayer* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006), 224.

<sup>10</sup> Lynn Gardner, *Where is God When We Suffer?: What the Bible Says about Suffering* (Joplin, MO: College Press Publishing Co., 2007).

<sup>11</sup> Ariel Glucklich, *Dying for Heaven: Holy Pleasure and Suicide Bombers—Why the Best Qualities of Religion are also its Most Dangerous* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2009).

<sup>12</sup> Norman C. Habel, *The Book of Job: A Commentary* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1985).

*Hardest Questions*<sup>13</sup>, reveals that: “the thorns of life drive us to prayer.” In this book, Ogilvie helps to place Paul’s prayerful inquiry as a prevailing example of asking God questions. While Maya Graves in her book, *Letters from Your Father God*,<sup>14</sup> explains that wisdom should be exercised when confronting God. She further identifies the sovereignty of God and makes mention of His omniscience. This Biblical foundation is very essential to the overall project as it helps to launch the writer into even more pertinent study.

The historical study of this project helps the writer engage past perspectives on the subject beyond the Bible. The history surrounding this focus of emotional pain and the various features of origination, points to the existence of stressors that alter the perception of a person’s thinking. “There is little doubt that emotional distress can lower a person’s pain threshold and increase pain. Stress also takes a serious physical toll: many studies show that stress causes muscles to tighten, disturbs appetite and sleep habits, and triggers the production of stress hormones.”<sup>15</sup>

Stressors can be labeled as physical, mental, circumstantial, and even spiritual. The existence of these stressors merit conversation on how the body responds and how the mind reacts. “The experience of pain has two consequences: the overt behavior of pain, and the subjective experience of pain. The job that faces physicians is determining the source of the pain and treating the pain.”<sup>16</sup> As a result, a myriad of scientific study has been conducted to further shape the validity of this research. With the frequent use of

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<sup>13</sup> Lloyd John Ogilvie, *Asking God Your Hardest Questions* (Colorado Springs: Waterbrook Press, 1981).

<sup>14</sup> Maya Graves, *Letters from Your Father God* (Maitland, FL: Xulon Press, 2006).

<sup>15</sup> Richard B. Patt, and Susan S. Lang, *The Complete Guide to Relieving Cancer Pain and Suffering* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 281.

<sup>16</sup> C. David Tollison, John R. Satterthwaite, and Joseph W. Tollison, *Practical Pain Management: Third Edition* (Philadelphia: Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, 2002), 681.



pharmaceutical and street drugs on the rise, there is a need for conversation on how to alternatively address pain and its effects. “The field of pain management has arrived at a crossroads in history with regard to the topic of opioid analgesics. Over the past several years, one of the most widely used opioid pharmaceuticals, OxyContin, had become a popular alternative to street drugs such as heroin.”<sup>17</sup> Along with scientific measurements, there is also a wealth of knowledge surrounding human suffering on a world-wide scale. “Theology must holistically address the recent natural disasters that have caused thousands to suffer and die in pain. Why should our theology be silent on these issues? People are hurting and cry out to the church for answers.”<sup>18</sup> Of the numerous atrocities that have taken place, on a global level, a few episodes have been chronicled and examined for this focused study.

As the spiritual aspect of this subject is dealt with, the writer explores the theological positions of several expert opinions of those in ministry. The writer includes commentary of great theologians of the past and present in order to successfully build upon the research that has already been done in this area. One such author, for example, Stanley Huerwas believes that the Christian faith is not validated for the Believer except that they endure pain as a “good soldier.” Huerwas goes on to write:

Any truthful account of the Christian life cannot exclude suffering as integral to that life. Yet it is important that this not become an invitation to make suffering an end in itself or to acquiesce to kinds of suffering that can and should be alleviated. Admittedly, this is not an easy distinction to make in theory or in practice, but it is the kind of distinction that must be

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<sup>17</sup> Howard S. Smith, and Steven D. Passik, *Pain and Chemical Dependency* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 3.

<sup>18</sup> Jeffrey P. Greenman and Gene L. Green, *Global Theology In Evangelical Perspective: Exploring the Contextual Nature of Theology and Mission* (Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2012), 125.

hammered out by the common wisdom of a people who worship the God found on the cross of Jesus of Nazareth.<sup>19</sup>

Another very knowledgeable perspective comes from Cornelius Van Der Poel who has determined that pain and suffering has no correlation with sin, but rather is a mystery.

Although responsible behavior contributes to the maintenance of one's health, frequently illness is unavoidable and cannot be blamed on irresponsible behavior. Illness is a human reality that is often inexplicable. Efforts to give theological explanations, such as, "God allows us to suffer for our own good and for our sanctification," are insufficient. Theology has no answer.<sup>20</sup>

Because the learning process is endless, the writer has determined to construct a more refined model for ministries across the country, while making mention of the theological precedents of the past. One of the various ways in which to expound upon the study of pain in the church is to examine the possible remedies. Theologians across the country will contribute to this discussion of preventative measures, remedy, alternatives to the devastating effects of pain and suffering.

There are several examples of successful research outcomes that have utilized both qualitative and quantitative methods of research. In order to properly convey these research findings, the writer has proposed to conduct surveys, host sermon presentations, and examine participants through journal observations. In an effort to reach others and effect change, the writer is hopeful that utilization of past research methods will also produce successful data.

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<sup>19</sup> Stanley Hauerwas, *God, Medicine, and Suffering* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1990), 85.

<sup>20</sup> Cornelius J. van der Poel, *A Theology of Health Care Ministry* (Wisconsin: Sheen & Ward, 1999), 43.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **THEORETICAL FOUNDATION**

The following investigation will capture the variety of perspectives concerning pain as it relates to the Bible, history, and theology. The purpose of this study is to construct a solid foundation for the writer's ministry model. By embracing the scholarly opinions of the foremost authorities of this area of study, the writer is most effective in providing a more concise alternative for his context group to consider.

It is the objective of this theoretical foundation segment to highlight the most pertinent, intellectually sound information on the cause, effects, and solutions to pain. This compilation of ideas is what will help the writer aid those in his context group and beyond, with practical, Godly advice complete with expert commentary sufficient for dialogue and explanation. This gathering of academic reflections serve as the writer's guide to a broader framework as it pertains to the study of pain in association with Christian believers.

To fully grasp the concept of pain, the writer has decided to use the Biblical story of Job, from the Old Testament, and the life of Paul, from the New Testament. The writer also lifts several historical examples of pain and suffering felt on a larger scale. In order to properly place these examples in perspective, the writer lifts several theological points of view from qualified theologians from around the world. This varied, yet focused approach to understanding pain will provide a more thorough theoretical foundation for the writer as he gets closer to answering his hypothesis surrounding pain.

### Biblical Foundation

As the writer determines to investigate the subject of pain more fully, the Bible serves as the first point of reference to consider. The Bible provides fundamental truth of guiding principle concerning the Godly way of identifying, confronting, and handling pain. One of the ways in which to successfully interpret the Biblical examples surrounding pain is to gain understanding of the characters who endured their respective challenges. Job, one of the most celebrated Old Testament figures, will provide a greater awareness on the process of handling pain with unrelenting faith in God.

The reason that Job's story is so impressive is that he made a decision to trust in the Lord before, during, and after his painful experience. This type of endurance is parallel to faith, as it is a state of thinking that remains committed to a faithful God who sees all and knows all, regardless of the circumstance. To properly discuss the outcome in greater detail, understanding the beginning of Job's suffering is most important to consider.

The book of Job is the quintessential tale of underserved suffering. Job is a good and pious man whose unprovoked suffering moves the reader, both ancient and modern, to ask the eternal question, "If God truly loves us, how can God allow us to suffer?" This initial question leads to others: "Why did God create a world in which we suffer in the first place? Why do bad people often flourish and innocent people sometimes suffer? Is God testing me? Why does God rescue some, but not all?" and many more. Theologians often refer to these theological conundrums as the problems of *theodicy*; that is, how can we reconcile a God that is all-knowing, all-loving, and all-powerful (attributes typically associated with God) to a world riddled with heartache, despair, and death?<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> T. J. Wray, *What The Bible Really Tells Us: The Essential Guide To Biblical Literacy* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2011), 62.

Job is described as a “perfect man.”<sup>2</sup> His behaviors toward his family, friends, and associates were all in good standing and God richly blessed his businesses. “As the book opens, we see Job surrounded by wealth, family, position and friends.”<sup>3</sup> Job was not only well liked and financially secure, but he was also spiritually balanced. He took the time to pray daily and even offered sacrifices to the Lord for the unforeseen sins of his grown children. “Job was a very wealthy man, perhaps the richest in the world, but his greatest treasure was his children, seven sons and three daughters. Every morning before the sun rose he prayed that God would protect them through the day.”<sup>4</sup> Job’s standard of living, coupled with his authentic commitment to God helps to establish his righteousness. “The True Living God protected Job by a hedge, which Satan could not go over it.”<sup>5</sup> There is also indication that Job’s heart was stubborn to the things of God as evidenced in his abundance and even the divine protection that was placed around him and his family. “Job is portrayed in these first five verses as a true patriarch, upright with respect not only to his moral and liturgical attitudes but also taking responsibility for those of his children (1:5). The ultimate goal of this first scene is clearly to portray Job as unassailable, conscientious, and perhaps practically perfect in every way.”<sup>6</sup>

This introduction into the life of Job is important to note as there is a sudden shift in his life before his very eyes. All of a sudden, just when Job was least expecting, Job’s

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<sup>2</sup> NIV, Job 1:1.

<sup>3</sup> Henrietta C. Mears, *What The Bible Is All About Handbook—Revised—KJV Edition: Bible Handbook* (Ventura, CA: Regal, 2011), 206.

<sup>4</sup> John Ashton, and Michael Westacott, *The Big Argument: Does God Exist?* (Green Forest, AR: Master Books, 2005), 190.

<sup>5</sup> George Spiteri, *Return Of The Living Jesus Christ* (Maitland, FL: Xulon Press, 2007), 102.

<sup>6</sup> Meira Z. Kensky, *Trying Man, Trying God: The Divine Courtroom In Early Jewish And Christian Literature* (Tubingen, Germany: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), 40.

world turned upside-down. His wealth became obsolete as thieves broke into his fields and stole his livestock; all of his children died; and his own health was in jeopardy. “Job lost all his wealth in one day! He lost his livestock, grain, workers, children and possibly his wife. He received one bad report after another from people who had escaped from the destruction.”<sup>7</sup> Every fear that Job had concerning his life, became realized all at once. Job was in utter despair and suffered a combination of pain as his experience included grief, financial hardship, and physical sickness.

In one hour, everything he had spent a lifetime to accumulate and build had been savagely destroyed. But Job had yet to reach the end of his heartaches that day. When tragedy strikes, it takes time for the numbness of the pain to fade away into absolute brokenness. So Job melted away down to the forsaken earth and poured his heart out to his God, seething inside as the fires burned behind him and his hillsides were littered with the bodies of the dead.<sup>8</sup>

It is no wonder that Job cried out to God with several questions as his overwhelming misery was thought to be undeserved.

Job was a spiritually and morally upright man. Could any suffering be more undeserved? Should not such a righteous person be blessed, not badgered, by God? The fact that Job, an outstanding citizen and upright person, had so much and then lost so much makes him a supreme example of affliction that defies human explanation.<sup>9</sup>

Job legitimizes his question of “why this happened,” by reminding himself of his own righteous behaviors relative to God’s holy standards.

Slowly and thoughtfully, Job began to question some of the major tenets of his beliefs. Job was ready to challenge God by offering his own nuances. Job believed in God but lacked full understanding of the nature

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<sup>7</sup> Marcus D. Benjamin, *Eternal Economics: Establishing The Connection Between Faith And Finances* (Mustang, OK: Tate Publishing & Enterprises, LLC, 2007), 34.

<sup>8</sup> Esther Amariah, *Mercy and Grace: Victory Through Hardships* (Bloomington, IN: WestBow Press, 2011), 4.

<sup>9</sup> Walter L. Baker, Craig A. Blaising, et.al, *Bible Knowledge Commentary: Old Testament* (Colorado Springs: CO: David C. Cook, 1983), 715.

of God. Job thought God was the cause of his trouble. Therefore, there was a need to confront God for mistreating the man who loved God with all his heart.<sup>10</sup>

In this narrative, we find Job baffled with the sudden sufferings of loss along with the mental anguish of unanswered questions. As a result, Job's faith was definitely overwhelmed, but never forfeited. "Nobody would really have blamed him had his faith been shaken and his accountability questioned. But Job stuck to his guns. He stayed accountable."<sup>11</sup> Regardless of the grief felt after the death of his children; the suffering of physical sickness; and the torment of financial instability, Job remained steadfast in his trust in God. Job's steadfastness stems from the fact that he intentionally did not curse God, but rather, worshipped Him.

The very first thing that Job did after he lost his wealth and his children was to worship God: "At this, Job got up and tore his robe and shaved his head. Then he fell to the ground in worship and said: 'Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked I will depart. The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away; may the name of the Lord be praised'" (Job 1:20-21 NIV). Job was able to maintain his confidence in God's sovereignty in the midst of adversity. This confidence gave him incredible patience.<sup>12</sup>

Although Job questioned his present set of circumstances, he was careful not to curse God for his sufferings.

Questioning God to be removed from a situation; asking Him for answers to understand a troubling circumstance; or even asking God what sins may have been committed to have brought about the suffering are all legitimate, but they won't make the pain go away. "The Book of Job also teaches that to ask why, as Job did (3:11-12, 16,

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<sup>10</sup> Cornelius Ogundele, *God, Satan, And Mr. Job: Answers to Life Puzzling Questions* (Maitland, FL: Xulon Press, 2004), 72.

<sup>11</sup> Jay W. Foreman, *Still Learning* (Bloomington, IN: CrossBooks, 2011), 48.

<sup>12</sup> Warren W. Wiersbe, *Be Patient (Job): Waiting On God In Difficult Times* (Colorado Springs, CO: Victor Books, 1991), 8.

20), is not wrong. But to demand that God answer why, as Job also did (13:22; 19:7; 31:15), is wrong. To insist that God explain one's adversities is inappropriate for it places man above God and challenges God's sovereignty."<sup>13</sup> Only God, who is Sovereign, is able to change circumstances and situations. Many people, like Job, find themselves in positions of helplessness and question the reasons for the calamity; however, most people, unlike Job, decide to curse God.

Trusting God when the miracle does not come, when the urgent prayer gets no answer, when there is only darkness—this is the kind of faith God values perhaps most of all. This is the kind of faith that can be developed and displayed only in the midst of difficult circumstances. This is the kind of faith that cannot be shaken because it is the result of having been shaken.

Though his world had been shaken, we see that Job was still firm in his faith. Right in the middle of his “why” questions, Job said (Job 19:25): “I know that my Redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand on the earth.”<sup>14</sup>

Job's faithfulness to intentionally bless, instead of curse God is what is so unique about this story. It is this story that sets the precedence for believers as it pertains to unsettling situations.

Often Job is mentioned as one who had many questions for God. He put God at the center of his life. He feared God and shunned evil. And yet, the bottom fell out of his life. Still, in all this, Job did not sin by charging God with wrongdoing. So, when Job asked God questions about why his life was so messed up, God answered his questions, right? Wrong. Job may have filtered God's answers through his worldview and likely accepted them, but God didn't even offer a response. He didn't reveal His master plan. Instead, He did something better: He revealed Himself.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Baker, *Bible Knowledge Commentary*, 715.

<sup>14</sup> Nancy Guthrie, *Holding on to Hope: A Pathway Through Suffering To The Heart Of God* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 2002), 54.

<sup>15</sup> Woodrow Kroll, *An Interview with God: Questions You're Asking And How The Bible Answers Them* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2004), 154.



As a direct result of Job's several questions, God responded to him in a whirlwind.<sup>16</sup> God spoke to Job with answers to his questions and established His divine genius relative to Job's limited comprehension. The conversation between God and Job is crucial to understanding the Sovereignty of God in the midst of pain and suffering. In Job 38:4-7, God reminds Job of his humanity and decides to question Job instead.

What God said to Job was put in the form of a series of questions, all intended to reveal the sovereignty of the Lord and the absurdity of Job's challenges to him. With disarming profundity, God asked, "Where were you when I laid the earth's foundation?" The questions posed were intended to put Job in his proper place—a humble position before God. Clearly, Job was nowhere to be found at the time of creation. If Job did not create the world, what made him think he could run it? "Tell me, if you understand," God declared. But, of course, Job did not understand the genius of God in creation. So how could he possibly counsel or correct God about the governance of his life?<sup>17</sup>

Although Job was unaware of God's decision to test Job's faithfulness, God did not cause the suffering that Job experienced. God permitted the hedge of protection to be removed from around Job, while Satan was the one who actually inflicted the torment that Job experienced.

In the case of the long-suffering Job, we know that Satan instigated the mischief which produced Job's travails. However, it could not have happened without the permission of God, who told Satan that everything Job had in the world, except Job's life, was then vulnerable to Satan's power for a time (Job 1:12, 2:6). Significantly, Satan sought with evil intent to embarrass God by exposing the shallowness of human faith, by destroying rather than testing or benefiting Job. But God did not originate Job's trials, although He had to concur in the testing of job before the trials through Satan could occur.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> NIV, Job 38:1.

<sup>17</sup> Steven Lawson and Max Anders, *Holman Old Testament Commentary Volume 10—Job* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2004), 327.

<sup>18</sup> Ronald D. Anton, *God's Seven Ways To Ease Suffering* (Maitland, FL: Xulon Press, 2007), 405.

Jesus even taught His disciples that “a house divided against itself, cannot stand.”<sup>19</sup> God is not evil, and therefore does not have evil intentions toward, nor does He inflict evil upon those He loves. It is because of this story that we gather hope while enduring heartache, pain, and various sufferings.

Job knew what it was like to suffer because God allowed the devil to cause him to lose everything. However, Job discovered in the midst of everything how much God really loved him. He had to repent because he had murmured and complained and focused on what had happened to him. God was trying to show Job and the devil how much God loved Job. God restored Job with the riches of His goodness after Job repented.<sup>20</sup>

Job’s life, after surviving Satan’s torments, was more abundant than the years prior to his sufferings. “God then restored the fortunes of Job, giving him exactly double the amount of his former wealth. In the case of his ten children who had been killed, God did not give Job double this time. But He did give Job ten more children, seven sons and three daughters, just as before.”<sup>21</sup> God delivered Job and gave him more than what he lost in every area: more children, finances, and restored health.

The book of Job continues to exemplify the tremendous effects of faith applied during times of suffering. “Evidently Job had proven over and over again that he would be faithful to God no matter what.”<sup>22</sup> Although Job’s faith was tested, he was proven to be committed to the Lord, as he carefully decided to maintain a posture of reverence and honor to God. By not cursing God, Job established what “not to do” during times of suffering; and by choosing to respect God while suffering, Job helps us to understand

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<sup>19</sup> NIV, Mark 3:25.

<sup>20</sup> Kashana “K.J.” Gallentine, *You Can Overcome the Jealousites in Your Life* (Bloomington, IN: AuthorHouse, 2011), 169.

<sup>21</sup> Carl Wells, *Nameless Heroes of the Bible* (Bloomington, IN: AuthorHouse, 2012), 11.

<sup>22</sup> Nancy Guthrie, *The One year Book of Hope Devotional* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 2005), 202.

what “to do” for the duration of our pain. Additionally, this story presents a great coping method as Job is surrounded by his friends. Even though Job’s friends were not as encouraging as they could have been, they still provided him with company with good intentions.

Job’s friends comforted him. When they sat with him for seven days and nights, they grieved and wept with him but did not say anything. They were willing to be quiet and let him suffer without adding to his suffering. They were a solace to him in his hour of need.

In Job 2, Job’s friends set good examples for us to follow as we seek to respond to the needs of others. However, their approach deteriorated rapidly because of their lack of understanding.<sup>23</sup>

Although Job’s friends decided to sacrifice their time to mourn with him, some would argue that they were a part of Job’s mental anguish along with his other trials. Job’s friends may not have said the right words at the right time, but their purpose for being there was good. Along with Job’s friends, Job’s wife was also a force to consider in this story as the subject of pain in explored.

Not even his wife can bring him relief. The man is tormented by his afflictions and broken in spirit. If anyone on earth ever needed the comfort of a friend, Job did. His friends came, but comfort was not to be found.

It was bad enough to have them sit and stare in silence, but when they opened their mouths things only got worse. Talk about bad counsel. Oh, they didn’t mean it to be bad—they just lost sight of their purpose. And what was that? Stop and remember. Originally they came to sympathize with him and to comfort him (Job 2:11). Of the hundreds of business associates and dozens of friends Job knew, only these showed up. In fact, they came for the right reason.

They came to him as we would drive to the hospital to visit a friend who is terminally ill. You and I don’t know what to say, so we often stand nearby and say very little. Admittedly, there are times we speak and say the wrong thing. We leave thinking, why did I say that? We wish we

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<sup>23</sup> James T. Draper, Jr., *Difficult Times, Encouraging Words* (Bloomington, IN: CrossBooks, 2009), 64.

had just stayed quiet. Total silence is so much better than inappropriate words. We've all blown it by saying a little more than we should.<sup>24</sup>

Like Job, most people who find themselves in painful situations become confronted with hurtful feedback from those closest to them. It is in this story that we find Job's wife exemplifying dreadful opposition when he was most vulnerable.

Throughout this narrative, Job serves as a courageous prototype for those confronting pain in their lives. With God's permission to remove the protective hedge from around Job, Satan was able to inflict each of these horrible sufferings upon Job. Again, it is important to remember that God did not torment Job, Satan did. But, through the suffering, God observed Job's behaviors as a testing of his faith.

By choosing Job for the test, God provided the Church with one of the best examples of what a relationship with him should entail. He allowed Job to be tested at the hands of Satan in order to reveal the true faith of one of his servants. No matter how much he suffered, Job never changed his reverence, respect, or love for God. His relationship transcended his physical state. It did not matter how high or low he was, he always kept his faith. In using Job as an example, God set the standard high for his people (James 5:10-11).<sup>25</sup>

Job did not disappoint God, but continued to seek His face, regardless of his various questions. Job's commitment to God, prior to his sufferings, pointed to a steadfast confidence and reverence in the Lord. And when the pain actually came, the seed of faith had already been rooted deep within Job, disallowing him to curse God, but rather prompted him to question God for the reasons for his circumstance instead.

The story of Job demonstrates for us the mystery of suffering and the life of Paul illustrates for us the ministry of suffering. Once again revealing the fact that personal value can be will be gained through adversity. Paul.

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<sup>24</sup> Charles R. Swindoll, *Job: A Man of Heroic Endurance* (Nashville, TN: W. Publishing Group, 2004), 77.

<sup>25</sup> Samuel B. Black, *The Tribulation Strategy: Faith In The Coming Storm* (Bloomington, IN: WestBow Press, 2010), xxi.

Reached the placed in his life where he was able to rejoice over his distresses (II Corinthians 12:10). The benefits of his burdens became so obvious to him that he was able to find delight in his extremities.<sup>26</sup>

Another noteworthy figure helpful to the Biblical pattern of coping with pain is found in the New Testament description of the Apostle Paul. This very prolific character is best known for his several New Testament writing contributions. Paul is often credited for writing at least “thirteen books of the New Testament and plant many churches throughout the Roman world.”<sup>27</sup> It is important to understand Paul’s background before his conversion, in order to appreciate his pain experience after his encounter with Christ.

Paul was born as Saul to a Jewish family in Tarsus, where he was raised. The New Testament describes him as well-educated in the tradition of the Pharisees and in the best of Greek and Roman thought. The book of Act indicates that he was trained at the feet of Gamliel, the *nasi* or president of the Academy of Hillel. Saul originally was intent on destroying the sect that had developed around Jesus. He traveled around persecuting Christians, even overseeing their first martyrdom (Acts 7:54-8:1).<sup>28</sup>

Paul was an impressive student and scholar as he was able to fluently speak several languages: Aramaic, Greek, and Hebrew.<sup>29</sup> Additionally, Paul became a tremendous asset to the Jewish Sanhedrin, as he served, taught, and executed the Levitical laws with precision. Among the consensus of the Sanhedrin, the elimination of Christians became the order of the day.

Early anti-Christian activity in Jerusalem seems to have been connected to the Sanhedrin. Paul himself attests to Jewish anti-Christian activity in the Diaspora, where a stylized violence motivated by

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<sup>26</sup> Deanna Blackmon Jones, *The Faith Arena* (Maitland, FL: Xulon Press, 2007), 49.

<sup>27</sup> Jim George, *The Bare Bones Bible Facts: A Quick Reference to People, Places, & Things* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 2009), 39.

<sup>28</sup> Sara E. Karesh, and Mitchell M. Hurvitz, *Encyclopedia of Judaism* (New York: Facts On File, Inc., 2006), 383.

<sup>29</sup> M. David Sills, *Reaching And Teaching: A Call To Great Commission Obedience* (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2010), 95.

murderous envy and anachronistic theological concerns are described. Paul, as one of these hostile Diaspora Jews persecuted Christians by lashing (2 Cor. 11:24). Jewish law specified two sorts: *makkot arbaim*, the thirty-nine lashes, traditionally a punishment administered for specific violations of negative commandments; and *makkot mardut*, a disciplinary lashing administered at the discretion of the local court.

Paul as a Jew persecuted Jewish Christians, in this view, because they challenged religious principles fundamental to Judaism. Whether because they preached a crucified messiah or because they received Gentiles without requiring circumcision, these Christians violated Torah in the name of salvation in Christ.<sup>30</sup>

Exterminating Jewish believers in Christ was not unique to Saul. Saul was among several passionate Jews who persecuted Christians. One day, as Saul was traveling with orders to kill Jewish believers of Jesus Christ, he was met by the Lord himself. Saul was blinded by the righteousness of God and was instructed not to persecute the Christians anymore.<sup>31</sup> As a matter of fact, Paul became a Christian himself that day.

On his way to Damascus to persecute Christians there, Saul had a vision of Christ that altered the course of his life. Saul was baptized and took the name Paul. Later in Damascus Paul's enemies attempted to assassinate him, but he escaped by having his friends lower him over the city walls in a basket.

Paul Travelled extensively, and while on these missionary journeys wrote the Epistles which became such a major influence on Christian theology and on the development of Christianity.<sup>32</sup>

It was during Paul's Christophany, that he experienced the truth of Jesus' birth, death, burial, and resurrection.<sup>33</sup> Paul changed his mission, no longer to purge Israel of Christians, but rather, to spread this Gospel of Jesus throughout Israel and to the rest of the world.

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<sup>30</sup> Paula Fredriksen, *From Jesus To Christ: The Origins Of The New Testament Images Of Christ Second Edition* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1988), 145.

<sup>31</sup> NIV, Acts 9: 3-6.

<sup>32</sup> Jeanne L. Jackson, *Red Letter Days: The Christian Year In Story For Primary Assembly* (London, UK: Stanley Thornes Publishers, Ltd., 1995), 30.

<sup>33</sup> NIV, Acts 9: 20-22.

Paul's plight, however, was revealed through divine revelation that he would suffer great things for the sake of Christ<sup>34</sup>, as he also inflicted much suffering to the early church before his conversion.<sup>35</sup> Here, we find Paul's own words most applicable: "be not deceived, God is not mocked: for whatever a man sows, that shall he also reap."<sup>36</sup> Although Paul was righteous in his own thinking when he committed those violent actions toward the early church, he eventually learned the error of his ways and became subject to this "sowing and reaping" principle.

It has been asked, how could Paul say that he was the chief of sinners? How did he know this? He would not say unreal words, and yet he spoke with evident sincerity, with evident assurance of its truth. The reader has doubtless heard the solution of this. He knew the aggravation of his own sins—how in persecuting the members of Christ's Body he came across instances of faith in God, of trust in Him in life and death, of patience, of long-suffering, of love for persecutors, even of prayer for their forgiveness, such as he had never seen before.<sup>37</sup>

Like Paul, some people come to know the Lord after they have already been involved in hideous acts and crimes against their fellow man. However, there is no sin that God cannot forgive, and because of salvation through Christ Jesus<sup>38</sup>, we are able to overcome the trials that come upon us as a direct result of our former, sinful actions. Another principle found among Paul's writings also validates the redemptive nature of

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<sup>34</sup> NIV, Acts 9:16.

<sup>35</sup> Walter Schmithals, *The Theology Of The First Christians* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1997), 105.

<sup>36</sup> NIV, Galatians 6:7.

<sup>37</sup> Michael Ferree Sadler, *The Epistles of St. Paul To The Colossians, Thessalonians, And Timothy* (London: George Bell and Sons, 1896), 193.

<sup>38</sup> NIV, Titus 2:14.

Christ as he declares: “all things work together for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose.”<sup>39</sup>

Paul’s predetermined suffering that he “must endure” has produced much debate concerning the reasons why Christian’s suffer. Some believe that Christian’s must suffer pain because of the decision to follow Christ.

We then suffer for Christ, when we suffer for Christ’s cause; when we suffer because we will be Christians, we will be holy and righteous; when we suffer because we will not sin; and when we suffer upon Christ’s call, when He cuts out a cross for us and lay it upon us. Then Christ call us to suffering when he puts us to this choice, either to suffer or to sin; when either our backs or our consciences must suffer; when we must suffer, or He must suffer by us.

We must not leave our way to seek a cross; when Christ has laid a cross athwart a Christian’s way that he should go, and he must either make a stand or turn aside, or submit his neck to it, then He says, There is your cross. Take it up and go! Whatever cross is before you, if you have a way open to avoid it without sin, that is not your cross. You may not take it up. Or if you do, you will have no thanks for your pains.<sup>40</sup>

Those of the Christian community who believe that one must suffer in order to be a follower of Christ, often hold fast to Timothy’s words when He declared: “If we suffer, we will also reign with Him: if we deny him, he also will deny us.”<sup>41</sup> According to most intellectual commentary, this scripture deals with the “sufferings” or “persecutions” because of the believer’s choice to follow Jesus. “Suffering will be a constant companion in the life of a believer. Suffering for Christ’s sake is the will of God. We must believe that even as it was the Father’s will for Christ to suffer for our sins, so it is His will that

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<sup>39</sup> NIV, Romans 8:28.

<sup>40</sup> Richard Alleine, and Joseph Alleine, *Heaven Opened* (Whitefish, MT: Kessinger Publishing, 2004), 22.

<sup>41</sup> NIV, 2 Timothy 2:12.



we suffer as we identify with Christ.”<sup>42</sup> The scripture says: “blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”<sup>43</sup>

Several other Bible scholars, however, feel that pain is a direct result of living in a sin-filled, fallen world. “Failure and suffering aren’t punishment for our sins; they are the result of living in a sin-filled world.”<sup>44</sup> The scholarly commentary surrounding original sin is often at the core of this position.

Original sin is called “sin” only in an analogical sense: it is a sin “contracted” and not “committed”—a state and not an act. Adam and Eve transmitted to their descendants human nature wounded by their own first sin and hence deprived of original holiness and justice; this deprivation is called “original sin.” As a result of original sin, human nature is weakened in its powers; subject to ignorance, suffering and the domination of death; and inclined to sin (this inclination is called “concupiscence”).<sup>45</sup>

Regardless of the reasons for Paul’s excitement surrounding his sufferings, the fact that Paul endured many afflictions for the sake of Christ, is true. “Additional reports exist, reporting that Paul suffered and was martyred for his faith. Paul’s commitment to the message he preached leads us to conclude that he sincerely believed in the truth of his message.”<sup>46</sup> Paul was victimized, mistreated, and eventually was killed for his belief in Jesus Christ as the Messiah.

One of the most attention-grabbing encounters Paul had with pain, however, was when he was able to communicate with God concerning the removal of his suffering and

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<sup>42</sup>Barbara Bryant, *Compensated Suffering* (Maitland, FL: Xulon Press, 2009), 153.

<sup>43</sup>NIV, Matthew 5:10.

<sup>44</sup> Ken Stocker, *Facts, Faith, And The FAQs* (Maitland, FL: Xulon Press, 2006), 215.

<sup>45</sup> D. Brian Scarnecchia, *Bioethics, Law, and Human Life Issues: A Catholic Perspective On Marriage, Family, Contraception, Abortion, Reproductive Technology, and Death and Dying* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2010), 106.

<sup>46</sup> Michael R. Licona, *The Resurrection Of Jesus: A New Historiographical Approach* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2010), 398.

God's denial response. Found in the book of 2 Corinthians, Paul describes his pain as a "thorn in his flesh."<sup>47</sup> This description is vague, as the source of his pain could be interpreted as being of a physical, mental, or spiritual nature. Physical, meaning it could have been a sickness; Mental, being that his pain could have been a wrestling of thoughts with an unsettling distress; or Spiritual, meaning that Paul's "thorn" could have been an agony with a vice, a sin, or an addiction that kept him in an uncomfortable state of being.

Most interpreters are inclined to see Paul's thorn in the flesh as a physical ailment. At that point the agreement ends. Every conceivable sickness has been suggested. A number of scholars have suggested epilepsy. A suggestion first made by W.M. Ramsay was that Paul suffered from malaria, contracting it in the Pamphylian lowlands and suffering an attack shortly thereafter in Galatia. Another suggestion has been that Paul suffered from neurasthenia, a paralysis of the facial nerves that would account for his stumbling speech (2 Cor. 10:10; 11:6). A number of scholars have seen Paul as suffering from a distress of his eyes. This is based on his regular use of an amanuensis (secretary) and his reference to writing in "large letters" (Gal. 6:11). Some have suggested, usually with tongue in cheek, that Paul's thorn in the flesh was his wife. Most contemporary scholars who maintain that Paul was married admit that he was single when he wrote 1 Corinthians. It is maintained that Paul's wife left him when he became a Christian. She would be among the things of which he suffered loss when he became a Christian (Phil. 3:8).<sup>48</sup>

No matter the type of affliction he experienced, we know from scripture that Paul suffered on a daily basis and sought God for complete deliverance. Contrary to what Paul requested, God decided not remove the problem Paul was troubled by.

Paul's thorn in the flesh was so painful and uncomfortable that he prayed to the Lord three times for deliverance. He yearned for God to remove this thorn. Paul saw the thorn as a hindrance, because it bothered and hurt him. Although Paul cried persistently to the Lord, God did not remove the

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<sup>47</sup> NIV, 2 Corinthians 12:7-10.

<sup>48</sup> John B. Polhill, *Paul and His Letters* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 1999), 41-42.

thorn. Instead of God removing Paul's pain, He gave him a reason to rejoice in the midst of his pain.<sup>49</sup>

Instead, God decided to reveal His process of keeping Paul humble. The humbling process can be a daily experience for some, and for others, it only takes one lesson learned. Paul was reminded of his humanity every time he felt the pain of the thorn in his flesh. "His 'thorn in the flesh' troubled him only until he became an overcomer; after humility had been worked in Paul's life, he no longer was hurt or pricked by this thorn as his flesh had been crucified."<sup>50</sup>

Humility is a very important lesson learned from observing Paul in his condition, as he was given more revelation to the things of God than most of the other Apostles. "It is by grace that Saul of Tarsus, the foremost of sinners (1 Tim. 1:15-16), became the foremost apostle, laboring more abundantly than all the other apostles. His ministry and living by this grace are an undeniable testimony to Christ's resurrection."<sup>51</sup>

Paul was able to see into the heavenly realm and was given opportunities to speak to the ascended Christ on various occasions.

After the ascension the resurrected Christ appears to Paul on several occasions. Paul acknowledged that he performed miracles, that he prophesied by the power of the Spirit, that he spoke in tongues and that he received "revelation" from God. Paul referred to these mystical experiences as if they were a "normal" part of his spirituality.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Charles E. Jordan, Jr., *Spending Time With God: Daily Devotionals To Empower the Life Of The Saint* (Bloomington, IN: WestBow Press, 2012), 303.

<sup>50</sup> Betty Miller, *The Will of God* (Dewey, AZ: Christ Unlimited Ministries, Inc., 1980), 18.

<sup>51</sup> Witness Lee, *Life-Study of 1 Corinthians: Messages 48-69* (Anaheim, CA: Living Stream Ministry, 1984), 591.

<sup>52</sup> Rodney Reeves, *Spirituality According to Paul: Imitating The Apostle of Christ* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2011), 226.

His access into the supernatural divine realm, and the wisdom, knowledge, and understanding gained from his encounters could have easily made Paul feel better than the next person.

St. Paul had received extraordinary insights from Jesus when he visited the third heaven, and such knowledge could have made any man proud and boastful because of these privileged revelations. God used or allowed Satan to inflict a thorn in the flesh to remind Paul of his total dependence upon God for every blessing, including spiritual knowledge. Paul was allowed to suffer, as part of his training in true humility, to prevent the pride of self-importance, and maintain his reliance on God.<sup>53</sup>

God's Word cannot fail<sup>54</sup>, He lovingly decided to keep Paul in a humble position before men so that Paul's spiritual effectiveness would remain: "for the person who is greatest among you must be your servant."<sup>55</sup>

It was after God's response to Paul concerning his request that Paul gained revelatory insight. Rather than loath his situation and regretting his relationship with God, Paul decided to embrace his circumstance to the point of celebration.

Instead of allowing the thorn to keep Paul from ministry, Paul allowed the thorn to become a part of God's purpose for his life. The fact that God wanted the thorn in Paul's life proved it was God's best for his life. Paul did not allow this affliction to hinder his effectiveness for Christ. In fact, after God told Paul, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness;" Paul responded, "therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me" (2 Cor. 12:9). Paul understood the grace of Almighty God would be at work in his life to sustain him during the course of this affliction. Understanding it was a part of God's plan for his life allowed Paul to look at the affliction from God's perspective instead of his own.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Anton, *God's Seven Ways to Ease Suffering*, 326.

<sup>54</sup> NIV, Isaiah 55: 11.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., Matthew 23:11.

<sup>56</sup> Ronald R. Alexander, *Rigged For The Journey* (Bloomington, IN: Xlibris Corp., 2010), 151.

It was when Paul realized that his humanity brought glory to God, that he encouraged himself and others who were inflicted to take pleasure in their sufferings.

Paul understood the very best for his life was the center of God's Will (Phil. 1:21). As a result, Paul did not allow the affliction to hinder his work for the Master; instead every time the thorn of the flesh raised its ugly head, Paul simply turned it over to God. Paul learned to be content with his affliction, because he had the promise of God that His grace would see him through each bout (Phil. 4:11-13).<sup>57</sup>

One of the most profound principles brought out by Paul's chronicled experience is his positive perspective with himself in God. Paul maintained a confidence in God, never doubting his place, position, or faith in God.

Based on a lifetime of trusting his Master, Paul could confidently tell the Philippians, "My God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus" (4:19). He had similarly told the Corinthians, "God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that always having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance for every good deed" (2 Cor. 9:8). Paul himself relied daily on Christ, resting in God's promise to him; "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness" (2 Cor. 12:9). Even in the midst of seemingly dire circumstances, Paul remained confident and thankful. Simply knowing he was in the Master's care made it possible to face any difficulty.<sup>58</sup>

Paul exemplified a greater affection to God. Here, we find that God is Paul's strength and his delight. For it is Paul's most vulnerable of situations that God's power is shown most strong in him. This is a very inspiring thought, as most believers carry a defeated attitude and therefore behave faithless during their times of vulnerability.

### **Historical Foundation**

Pain, as it pertains to a world historical context, is not new to the human condition. From the introduction of the first male and female, the beginning of an

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<sup>57</sup> Alexander, *Rigged for the Journey*, 151.

<sup>58</sup> John MacArthur, *Slave: The Hidden Truth About Your Identity in Christ* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2010), 50.

inherited curse was brought about because of original sin. As a result of one man's sin, all humanity continues to experience death by way of suffering.

Although Adam and Eve committed but a seemingly minor act of disobedience, their son committed murder (Gen 4:8). The descendants of that first couple carried on in the same sinful tradition. Stories of pride, betrayal, hate, rape, mass murder, and the like, are all recorded in the Old Testament (e.g., Gen 34). The history of sin continues. One need not go any further than the daily newspaper to realize that sin remains a dreadful reality in the world.<sup>59</sup>

Adam and Eve's story marks the inception of pain, and from their disobedience, a myriad of subsequent evils continues to endure. With the existence of pain, there seems to be an unending quest for its cure. Seeking comforting elements, inventions, and processes to rid people from the symptoms felt by pain.

Before the recent discovery of the body's nervous system and its interrelated system of neurons, scientists throughout history created several theories on the origins of pain and its subsequent antidote. Several of these theories include, but are not limited to: Specificity Theory; Pattern Theory; and the Gate Control Theory.

Specificity theory suggested by Von Frey in 1894 describes causal relationship between pain stimulus and pain experience. Stimulation of specific pain receptors throughout the body sends impulses along specific pain pathways through the spinal cord to specific areas of the sensory cortex of the brain. Stimulus intensity correlates with pain intensity, with higher stimulus intensity and pain pathway activation resulting in a more intense pain experience. Failure to identify a specific cortical location for pain, realization that pain fibres do not respond exclusively to pain but also to pressure and temperature, and the disproportional relationship between stimulus intensity and reported pain intensity (e.g. injured soldiers reporting little pain while similarly injured civilians requiring substantial medication) led to specificity theory losing favour.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> John Buckel, *Free To Love: Paul's Defense Of Christian Liberty In Galatians* (Walpole, MA: Peeters Press, 1993), 47.

<sup>60</sup> Brian Evans, Cailine Woodall, David Marks, et.al, *Health Psychology: Theory, Research And Practice 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition* (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications Inc., 2005), 313.

The Specificity Theory is simply understood as a pain measurement by way of sensory indicators. In other words, pain is measured by the intensity of the wound. For example, the damage made from a paper cut versus a knife injury suggests more pain will be felt with the injury having done the most damage to the body. Where this theory goes wrong, however, is that pain intensity is not limited to the sensations experienced by the damage only, but pain intensity is subjective, and not necessarily relative to sensory damage. Another theory used throughout history is the Pattern Theory.

Pattern theorists proposed that stimulation of nociceptors produces a pattern of impulses that are summated in the dorsal horn of the spinal cord. Only if the level of the summated output exceeds a certain threshold is pain information transmitted onwards to the cortex resulting in pain perception. Evidence of deferred pain perception (e.g. soldiers not perceiving pain until the battle is over), intact pain transmission systems where pain is perceived without (ongoing) injury and injury without pain perception raise questions concerning the comprehensiveness of pattern theories. In addition, there was growing evidence for a mediating role for psychosocial factors in the experience of pain, including cross-cultural differences in pain perception and expression.<sup>61</sup>

This particular Pattern Theory has helped to shape the world's understanding of pain as it provides a method of mathematical dialogue to describe the patterns of its frequency. By instituting a measuring method of identifying pain, the examination and diagnoses of pain has been streamlined into a more uniformed numeric statistical data that is easily interpreted by physicians throughout the western world.

Among the scientific theories developed during the beginning stages of scientific discovery, the Gate Control Theory (GCT) also gained wide-spread recognition.

The growing body of evidence contradicting direct line of transmission theories culminated in the development of the gate control theory (GCT) developed by Melzack and Wall in 1982. GCT views pain as a multidimensional and perceptual experience, in which ascending physiological inputs and descending psychological inputs are equally

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<sup>61</sup> Evans, *Health Psychology*, 313-314.

involved. GCT posits that there is a gating mechanism in the dorsal horn of the spinal cord that permits or inhibits the transmission of pain impulses.

The dorsal horn received inputs from nociceptors which it transmits to the brain via a neural gate. The dorsal horn also receives information from the brain about the psychological and emotional state of the individual. This information can act as an inhibitory control that closes the neural gate preventing the transmission of the nociceptive impulses and thus modifying the perception of pain. The mechanism operates based on the relative activity of the peripheral nociceptor fibres and the descending cortical fibres. Pain impulses must reach conscious awareness before pain is experienced. If awareness can be prevented, the experience of pain is decreased, eliminated or deferred.

GCT is the most influential theory of pain and continues to inform theoretical and empirical work. GCT offered substantial explanatory power, acknowledging a role for descending control and psychological, social and behavioral factors. However, the theory has received criticism, the most significant being the absence of direct evidence of a 'gate' in the spinal cord. More recently Melzack has updated the theory describing a neuromatrix, in place of the gate. Pain is the result of the output from this neural network programme, which is determined by sensory, cognitive, affective, experiential and genetic influences. Mapping the neural networks proposed by Melzack, and development of treatment approaches based on the theory, will determine the theory's potential to further our understanding of pain.<sup>62</sup>

To better understand the Gate Control Theory, is to build from the Specificity Theory and add to its definition an awareness of sensory nerve fibers that when activated, may slow down the sensation of pain. In other words, the Gate Control Theory suggests that when an injury takes place, nerve messages are sent to the brain that signals pain. However, there is a "gate" by which these pain signals are either allowed or disallowed. If the gate is open, pain is felt very quickly, however, if the gate is closed, pain may not even be experienced. Also, this theory suggests that there are alternative nerve fibers that may intercept these pain messages sent to the brain. For example, when a person touches something hot, they typically reach for cold water to pour over it to lessen the pain. This example helps to illustrate more fully the Gate Control Theory as the brain received the

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid., 314-315.



message of injury, but overrode the intensity of the pain messages by signaling other nerve fibers to dull the pain. Each of these most helpful theories of pain have been used on a global spectrum throughout the historical study of the subject. These helpful theories have since been further defined and built upon for the enhancement of scientific explanation.

Each of the above mentioned theories on pain have helped to shape the current understanding of pain as it relates to its source, remedy, and interpretation. Another area of exploration that is relative to the study of pain is the several treatments developed over time to offset adverse symptoms. It is due to the increased management of pain that has led to the creation of the pharmaceutical world.

Prior to the Federal Government's introduction of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), formed in 1906<sup>63</sup>, there was no regulation on medications, vaccines, nor prescriptions, to name a few. Prior to government intervention in the United States, several traditional remedies and natural agents were used as antidotes for pain.

As 20<sup>th</sup>-century technology advanced and created a growing admiration for technology and technologists, simple plant-and-water remedies were gradually discarded. Today, many Americans have lost touch with their herbal heritage. Few Americans realize that many over-the-counter (OTC) and prescription drugs have their origins in medicinal herbs. Cough drops that contain menthol, mint, horehound, or lemon are herbal preparations; chamomile and mint teas taken for digestion or a nervous stomach are time-honored herbal remedies; and many simple but effective OTC ache- and -pain-relieving preparations on every druggist's and grocer's shelf contain oils of camphor, menthol, or eucalyptus. Millions of Americans greet the morning with their favorite herbal stimulant—coffee.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> John Abraham, and Helen Lawton-Smith, *Regulation of the Pharmaceutical Industry* (New York: PALGRAVE MACMILLAN, 2003), 14.

<sup>64</sup> DIANE Publishing Company, *Alternative Medicine: Expanding Medical Horizons: A Report to the National Institutes of Health on Alternative Medical Systems and Practices in the United States* (Chantilly, VA: DIANE Publishing Company, 1992), 185.

It is interesting to note the various alternatives that were used to remedy pain throughout history and among various cultures. Everything from prayers to plants, people have determined to find cures to relieve themselves and their loved ones from their discomfort.

Far from these scenes of domestic medicine, researchers worked toward a scientific, laboratory-based understanding of how medicines healed. The modern age of pharmaceutical production of medicines opened with the Swiss pharmacist Friedrich Serteurner's isolation of morphine from opium in 1805. While opium was a complex plant extract with wide variations in potency, morphine was a single compound whose effects could be studied in isolation from other compounds and whose dose could be precisely controlled. Over the course of the nineteenth century, many active compounds were isolated from their plant sources; these included codeine, another extract from opium, and cocaine, taken from the coca plant. Heroin was formed by adding acetic anhydride to morphine to yield a semisynthetic drug which had the same effects as morphine but seemed more powerful because it entered the brain faster than morphine; it was introduced as a cough remedy in 1898. By the early twentieth century, a steady flow of new drugs emerged from pharmaceutical research each year, a process that continues today. While these drugs were introduced as medicines, some had powerful psychoactive effects. The invention of the hypodermic syringe in the 1850's added a new way to deliver drugs to the body that increased the intensity of the felt effects.<sup>65</sup>

Although several of the substances mentioned in the above quote help to focus this study relative to pain relief, they all contain addictive agents: having the propensity to control the person instead of the pain if mismanaged. "Pain is the most feared physiological response amongst humans and animals, and pain relief the most important therapeutic priority. Morphine remains the most valuable analgesic for the relief of severe pain."<sup>66</sup> Although morphine can be an addictive substance, its properties stand to provide relief to those who suffer from severe acute and chronic pain. One of the less addictive

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<sup>65</sup> Sarah W. Tracy, *Altering American Consciousness: The History of Alcohol and Drug Use in the United States 1800-2000* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2004), 4, 5.

<sup>66</sup> Enrique Ravina, *The Evolution of Drug Discovery: From Traditional Medicines to Modern Drugs* (Weinheim, Germany: WILEY-VCH Verlag & Co., 2011), 113, 114.

over-the-counter antidotes for pain to date is aspirin. “In 1897, German chemist Felix Hoffman developed a treatment for his father’s arthritis which became known as aspirin.”<sup>67</sup>

All of the sedatives and analgesics (anti-inflammatory) and anesthetics (tranquilizers) were necessary to discover, invent, and replicate for distribution as pain and suffering took on different dimensions overtime. Not only were physicians concerned with physical discomforts, but they were also looking into the minds of their patients to help relieve their reoccurring distresses. Clinical psychologists and medical practitioners began to infiltrate the medical arena with new opportunities for wellness improvements. Stress became a primary focus for some physicians as the trauma experienced by their patients, causing extreme stress was increasing.

Mental stress is more often a personal reaction. Hence, the causes behind stress could be as many as are the sufferers of mental stress. Even at the cost of repetition, it can be said that uncertainty is the major cause of stress and suspense a genuine killer. Serious threats, losses, demands, loneliness, change, sense of helplessness, acts that terrorize, humiliate, destroy self-esteem, and create a conviction of being isolated, abandoned and unwanted or forced inactivity, etc. are all stress-prone. Thwarting of motive, obstacle to progress due to delay, loss, failure or lack of resources, etc. can lead to stress. Conflict of motive because an issue has both positive and negative values or alternatives—reward or punishment, winning or losing or showdown can also lead to stress. Even lack of sleep, exhaustion, pain, loud noise, firing by boss, worrying to make both ends meet, non-availability of gas when guests are to come and loss of dear friends are causes likely to induce stress.<sup>68</sup>

The variety of stressors that continue to inflict worry on people to the point of mental anguish are captured in the above quote. These different areas of life, from home

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<sup>67</sup> Carol Eustic, *The Everything Health Guide To Arthritis: Professional Advice On Managing Pain, Choosing The Right Treatment, and Leading An Active Lifestyle* (Avon, MA: Adams Media, 2007), 96.

<sup>68</sup> C.R. Trivedi, *Mental Stress* (Vishal Enclave, New Delhi: Peacock Books, 2007), 30.

to public; and the assortment of emotions experienced, from loneliness to humiliation, may all be summed up with one common theme: fear. As the writer suggests, “uncertainty” is central to mental stress.

Stress is what the Bible warns against as it pertains to anxiety: “be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.”<sup>69</sup> The reason why the Bible instructs us not to worry is because panic, stress, and anxiety lead to physical ailments resulting in pain.

A great deal of research has been conducted over the years examining links between stress and physical health. Being under chronic stress suppresses the immune system (resulting in increased susceptibility to viral infections), increases risk of atherosclerosis (buildup of plaque along the walls of arteries so that the arteries become stiffer and restrict blood flow) and hypertension (high blood pressure), and leads to impaired memory and cognition. However, these effects depend on the kind of event, as well as one’s socioeconomic status. Experiencing negative events tends to lower immune function, whereas experiencing positive events tends to improve immune functioning.<sup>70</sup>

With the extensive investigative studies that have been done in the area of stress as it relates to pain, also include the cultural and social effects of uncertainty on national and international levels.

In the wake of September 11, 2001 (“9/11”), and the devastation caused by hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005 to the city of New Orleans and the Gulf Coasts of Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama, post-traumatic stress disorder is an emotional health condition that is experienced by thousands of people and their families. According to the National Mental Health Association, 5.2 million American adults (18 to 54 years old) have the

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<sup>69</sup> NIV, Philippians 4:6-7.

<sup>70</sup> Robert V. Kail, *Human Development: A Life-Span View Sixth Edition* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 2010), 467.

condition post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) during the course of a year.<sup>71</sup>

Although the immediate effects of social atrocities may not be felt, the lingering mental stresses of the event may cause more damage to the overall whole. These experiences felt both individually and corporately are very real, and cause for a more in-depth analysis for remedy sake.

A person with post-traumatic stress disorder replays a traumatic event again and again in his or her mind. The person may have been a victim, for example, of rape, incest, or some other type of sexual assault. Survivors of natural disasters, combat (30% of Vietnam War veterans, 8% of Persian Gulf War veterans, and 26% of soldiers returning from Iraq and Afghanistan), automobile accidents, as well as rescue personnel and people who witness a traumatic event may develop PTSD. Victims of social violence such as physical assault, car-jacking, gay bashing, or cross burning may develop this condition. These individuals keep reliving the traumatic event and dream about the trauma. When encountering a situation, being in an environment similar to the one involved in the trauma, or on the anniversary of the traumatic event, the person may become mentally and physically distressed, experience “flashbacks,” and have nightmares. Other symptoms include problems sleeping, irritability, and depression. To cope, he or she avoids conversations that remind his or her of the traumatic event.<sup>72</sup>

Several subsequent events happened after the devastation occurred during these most recent national desolations. In an effort to help those who were directly affected by the distressing events, national aid and emotional support were channeled to the victims and their respective communities.

Victims of a disaster or trauma need to feel secure. Psychological support, defusing, debriefing, and sometimes psychopharmacologic treatment are needed. Customs and rituals are important in all cultures and assist in the grief and mourning process. They may promote a feeling of safety. Rituals are also carried out within the community, and this helps in expressing feelings and providing a sense of relief. Studies have demonstrated that

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<sup>71</sup> Patricia A. Floyd, Sandra E. Minns, and Caroline Yelding, *Personal Health: Perspectives And Lifestyles Fourth Edition* (Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth, 2008), 35.

<sup>72</sup> Floyd, *Personal Health*, 35.

when people are given the opportunity to talk about their experiences as soon as possible after a catastrophic event, the symptoms of PTSD may be reduced.<sup>73</sup>

Knowing that the pain being experienced is real, and having the necessary time to absorb the shock of the devastation is important to the recovery process. For example, the President of the United States of America was able to direct the focus of the entire nation to the victims who were suffering due to the disasters experienced.<sup>74</sup> Not only did the President help to guide the country's attention, but also influenced the monetary, emotional, and immediate support for those in need. Emotional need is discussed in the following:

Emotional first aid is simple treatment that occurs immediately and in close proximity to the place where the emotional breakdown occurred. The patient is expected to recover quickly. It includes acceptance of feelings and symptoms, identification of resources and activities, realization of the psychologically painful situation and acceptance of reality, optimism, not blaming others, acceptance of help and support, and the resumption of daily life. The way an individual responds to stress depends on their genetic makeup, physical activity, and the normalcy of their sleep—wake cycle.<sup>75</sup>

The many ways in which mental stress is relieved nationally, may also be applied in an individual setting. There are remarkable strides that have been made in the area of recovery, namely: dwelling on inspirational thoughts; being physically active; and forgiving to allow healing to take permanent residence. Each of these secular suggestions has a spiritual association, as the Bible explicitly details the remedy for mental stress and anguish.

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<sup>73</sup> Phyllis C. Leppert, *Primary Care For Women Second Edition* (Philadelphia, PA: Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, 2004), 931.

<sup>74</sup> Rianne Letschert, *Assisting Victims Of Terrorism: Towards A European Standard Of Justice* (New York: Springer Science + Business, 2010), 120.

<sup>75</sup> Leppert, *Primary Care for Women*, 931.

### Theological Foundation

Some Biblical commentaries support the notion that pain and suffering among Christians are prompted by sin found in their lives. There are other Biblical interpretations that suggest pain and suffering is a necessary part of righteous living. According to Ellen T. Charry, pain helps the Christian to gain greater confidence in God.

Experiences of pain and suffering, especially watching the suffering of others, illuminate Christ's work on the cross. And God's bearing our pain on the cross also teaches that in our pain we are not alone but accompanied by God himself, so that the idea of following a crucified messiah is not a scandal at all but, rather, a relief. In John's gospel we meet Jesus washing the uncomprehending disciples' feet as he faces his own death. How much clearer an aretogenic text could there be? Each step forward in the mutual illumination of teaching and experience strengthens the self as one moves deeper into the mystery of divine wisdom.<sup>76</sup>

This quote helps to steer the thoughts of the believer in a more resolute way. With a more granular look into the sufferings of Christ, we are better able, according to Charry, to put into perspective our own struggles as minute comparatively. Here, Charry echoes the James' sentiments as he declares to the believer to "Count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience..."<sup>77</sup> The more the believer is able to mentally connect to the awesome example that Jesus has set, a greater opportunity for inward peace is produced. This peace is what settles the believer into perfecting patience.

For the believer, trials work for him and not against him. No amount of suffering can separate us from the Lord (Rom. 8:35-39); instead, trials bring us closer to the Lord and make us more like the Lord. Suffering builds Christian character. The word experience in Romans 5:4 means "character that has been proved." The sequence is tribulation—patience—proven character—hope. Our English word *tribulation* comes

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<sup>76</sup> Ellen T. Charry, *By the Renewing of Your Minds: The Pastoral Function of Christian Doctrine* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 244.

<sup>77</sup> NIV, James 1:2-8.

from the Latin word *tribulum*. In Paul's day, a *tribulum* was a heavy piece of timber with spikes in it, used for threshing the grain. The *tribulum* was drawn over the grain and it separated the wheat from the chaff. As we go through tribulations, and depend on God's grace, the trials only purify us and help to get rid of the chaff.

Faith (Rom. 5:1), hope (Rom. 5:2), and love (Rom. 5:5) all combine to give the believer patience in the trials of life. And patience makes it possible for the believer to grow in character and become a mature child of God (Jas 1:1-4).<sup>78</sup>

The patience both acquired and perfected during trials is what helps to mature the Christian. "Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with [patience] the race marked out for us..."<sup>79</sup> Here, Paul encourages our faith as he reminds us that we are not alone in this process of struggle: we are not experiencing pain for the first time, nor will we be the last to endure. "We need to endure suffering with patience, knowing that Jesus will bring us out with joy."<sup>80</sup>

Another noteworthy theologian with a more direct perspective comes from Dr. Dietrich Bonhoeffer. Bonhoeffer's story is an amazing journey of faithfulness to God during a time when he was being persecuted for his stance against Nazi dictatorship. Bonhoeffer, a world-renowned theologian, suffered at the hand of social injustice.

As one of a noble company of martyrs of differing traditions, he [Bonhoeffer] represents both the resistance of the believing soul, in the name of God, to the assault of evil, and also the moral and political revolt of the human conscience against injustice and cruelty. He and his fellows are indeed built upon the foundation of the Apostles and the Prophets.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> Warren W. Wiersbe, *Wiersbe Bible Commentary NT* (Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook, 2007), 420 and 421.

<sup>79</sup> NIV, Hebrews 12:1.

<sup>80</sup> Vickie Lewis, *He Called Me Victory* (Maitland, FL: Xulon Press, 2006), 28.

<sup>81</sup> Elizabeth Raum, *Dietrich Bonhoeffer: Called by God* (New York: The Continuum International Publishing Group, Inc., 2002), 14.



Although Bonhoeffer was eventually executed by the Hitler regime, he was consistently spreading the love of Christ throughout the world through his various writings while imprisoned. What we learn from Bonhoeffer's experience is that persecution, struggle, and pain are no respecter of persons. Bonhoeffer was among the more affluent minds of his day, and used his earned doctorate degree in the university settings throughout the world. Notwithstanding, his ability to learn new ideas concerning theological implementation never stopped. Upon one of his trips to America, he met and befriended Frank Fisher, an African-American college student, during the height of blatant racism in America.

Fisher asked Bonhoeffer to go back to Germany and tell his people about the suffering American blacks. There is concrete evidence that Bonhoeffer carried this message back with him. He worked and lived in the slums with wayward youth, and he made frequent use of black spirituals. His passion for the liberation of the oppressed in his home country is evidence of how his encounter with racism in Harlem impacted his life, his theology, and his witness on behalf of the Jews.<sup>82</sup>

It is interesting to note that Bonhoeffer even adapted several African-American congregational traditions within his own ministry. One of the African-American traditions that Bonhoeffer was most influenced by, was the intentional use of music within the church setting. So much was this impressed upon him, that Bonhoeffer quickly incorporated hymnals and other gospel music into his own ministry setting in Germany.

At the heart of the symphony of earthly life is the love of God. Bonhoeffer writes, 'What I mean is that God wants us to love him eternally with all our hearts—not in such a way as to injure or weaken our earthly love, but to provide a kind of *cantus firmus* to which the other melodies provide a counterpoint.' The *cantus firmus* is a musical term that can be translated from Latin as 'fixed song'. In medieval church music, the *cantus firmus* was a piece of existing music around which other melodies were set in order to create a polyphonic setting. The *cantus firmus* created the baseline

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<sup>82</sup> James Deotis Roberts, *Bonhoeffer And King: Speaking Truth To Power* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005), 46.

around which the other musical lines were composed. In adopting this metaphor, Bonhoeffer creates a vision of life in which the compatibility of divine and earthly love are expressed. In a polyphonic musical arrangement, the *cantus firmus* is the organizing baseline; so is it with the polyphonic life. In the polyphonic life, the love of God is the foundation. But this love doesn't forbid love for the world. Love of God and love of the world are not in competition with one another. The polyphony of life is such that humans are created to love God and the world, God and neighbor, and only in so doing are humans truly living the life God creates for them.<sup>83</sup>

Music for Bonhoeffer served as a soothing reminder of God's love for he and the world in which he lived. Bonhoeffer often used music as an analogy for fellow Christians, to familiarize themselves with the principal of God's love as foundational to their belief. Other theological perspectives further support this notion of connectivity of music to healing.

Pullar in her Penguin guide to spiritual healing for lay people, which attempts to take an objective stance, gives an account of how singing (background music) contributes to the healing process, as in the following instance: 'The healer stirred round in the patient's mouth and lifted the offending tooth as though it was lying there loose and waiting to be removed. Next he massaged the swollen glands in the patient's throat and made him sit back with his mouth wide open while he began to sing to him softly'. Stacy et al, as health educators, uphold the claim that singing specifically has health-giving properties. The founder of the Healing Music Organization in California, Amitra Cottrell claims she was healed from cancer through singing to herself, and argues that music has played a significant role in healing since the beginning of recorded history.<sup>84</sup>

Music can play a significantly positive role in the lives of those who are enduring pain and suffering. One of the ways in which music takes on this most therapeutic role is when melodies are combined with true reverence to God. "When you press your way in praise, you bring sacrifice of praise. When praises go up, blessings come down. When praises go up, it allows you to release all your cares to God, expressing adoration in awe

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<sup>83</sup> Joel Lawrence, *Bonhoeffer: A Guide For The Perplexed* (New York: T&T Clark Int, 2010), 115.

<sup>84</sup> Gwen Rose, *Health Promotion—Spiritual Healing* (Bloomington, IN: AuthorHouse, 2012), 115.

of who God is.”<sup>85</sup> This process of incorporating music with true praise to God is not only considered worship, but it also constitutes healing.

As we grow up, we never quite lose that love—or need—for music. The “soundtrack” of our lives gets formed, and on it are songs that we identify with specific occasions and years, good and bad. Sometimes our pain is so great that only music can bring us comfort. But it is worship songs especially that seem to connect God’s weary and grieving children with him.

Aren’t you glad that the healing power of God works whether we can hold a tune or not? Its power isn’t diminished or enhanced in the least by our musical ability. So don’t hold back; sing to God! Make a joyful noise! And count on the Spirit to use the right song to bring healing—for you and for others.<sup>86</sup>

Music has the propensity of changing one’s mood, either for the good or for the bad. When music is centered on praise to God and encouragement to the suffering and weak, there is an uplift of spirit. There is important significance of a person’s state of mind while they are undergoing tragedy and heartache. To advance this notion of possessing a positive mentality during tough situations is found in the book of Nehemiah. “Nehemiah said, ‘God and enjoy choice food and sweet drinks, and send some to those who have nothing prepared. This day is holy to our Lord. Do not grieve, for the joy of the Lord is your strength.’”<sup>87</sup> This very momentous declaration made by the Prophet is what should continue to sustain the minds of believers; for the opposite of this statement is also true. Jesus also declares that the enemy is a thief that “comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I (Jesus) have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.”<sup>88</sup> Because the enemy seeks to destroy the believer, he tries to strip them first of their strength. To

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<sup>85</sup> Dr. Carnetta E. Hartley, *Releasing the Hurt* (Bloomington, IN: AuthorHouse, 2005), 104.

<sup>86</sup> Dave Veerman, Linda Taylor, et al., *Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus: Inspiration From The Greatest Christian Song Lyrics of All Time* (Brentwood, TN: Worthy Publishing, 2011), 178.

<sup>87</sup> NIV, Nehemiah 8:10.

<sup>88</sup> NIV, John 10:10.

weaken the victim before the kill is a timeless war tactic that is utilized even in the spiritual arena. This is why the believer needs to stay joyous, since, according to the Word of God, their strength lies within their joy.

Rejoice beloved! The joy of the Lord is your strength. No matter what the situation looks like, the joy of the Lord is your strength. When you are in the midst of trials and hardships and your joy seems deficient, look to God and reflect on His goodness, therein you will find joy. Through the joy of the Lord, God imparts strength. The joy He gives far exceeds any earthly joy or pleasure. It is beyond comparison.<sup>89</sup>

The concept of joy, being an intangible remedy for often tangible problems, is Biblically relevant. Being joyous, even in sufferings, is an intentional state of mind. Bible believers are instructed to “be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.”<sup>90</sup> This mental transition is what helps the Christian to move beyond their hurtful realities, and into a peaceful state of joyous being.

We all look for joy in our lives and try to enjoy every moment. But sometimes the present moment does not offer joy, as it is dull and drab. We try to solve this problem by seeking escape. British author Samuel Johnson observes: “The time present is seldom able to fill desire or imagination with immediate enjoyment, and we are forced to supply its deficiencies by recollection or anticipation.” Yes, we fill the dull moments either by recalling joyful moments in the past or dreaming and enjoying the fantasies about future. This is a natural gift we all have. Yes, we are gifted with the power to forget what is painful and recall what is joyful when we are bored with the present. This is a great blessing and solace, because we can remember joyful experiences and enjoy them whenever we want. When we do this, the bitterness of unpleasant feelings fades away as they are out of focus.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> Christian M. Whitaker, *Standing On The Promises: Discover The Power Of Unshakable Faith* (Bloomington, IN: WestBow Press, 2012), 147.

<sup>90</sup> NIV, Romans 12:2.

<sup>91</sup> Prasanna Rao Bandela, *Joy of Living* (New Delhi: Sterling Publishers, 2007), 190.

Another significant theologian who has helped to shape the minds of believers is Edward Wimberly. Wimberly has developed an interesting perspective on communicating healing to the believer from of a pastoral position called the “discernment model.” This model lifts the importance of God’s presence as a fundamental component of holistic healing. Wimberly further explains his theory with a corresponding definition of faith, pertinent to his formula for healing.

In the discernment model of pastoral counseling, there is a close relationship between faith and healing. Faith in God’s healing and holistic activity, which is taking place in the counselee’s life and family, is the important ingredient in the healing process. Faith here is defined as the counselee’s growing trust of God’s healing forces at work within him or her and in the therapeutic relationship. Pastoral counseling is viewed as a process of enabling faith in God’s healing work; this awareness assists in the therapeutic process. When believers come to trust God’s relational presence, they gain the security to make necessary growth changes toward health and wholeness.<sup>92</sup>

Here, Wimberly emphasizes a relationship with God as the prerequisite component for an individual seeking healing. This position is supported with the Apostle Paul’s writings which declare: “And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.”<sup>93</sup> For the person desiring a miraculous healing manifestation in their life, they must first establish a belief in the God who is able to allocate these blessings to them. There are several persons who continue to stay in a depressed physical or mental rut, because they try everything else to help their condition except Jesus Christ.

Some divert from calling on God because of the guilt of feeling like a hypocrite. They only call on God when the troubles come. Many feel unworthy to pray to God for themselves. Others go to someone they

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<sup>92</sup> Edward P. Wimberly, *Prayer in Pastoral Counseling: Suffering, Healing, and Discernment* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1990), 11.

<sup>93</sup> NIV, Hebrews 11:6.

believe to have a relationship with God who can get a prayer through to Him for them. Humbly asking, “Please pray for me?”<sup>94</sup>

When a person only calls on God when they need something from Him, they place emphases on the gift, rather than the giver. The Bible, however, gives distinct guidance regarding an established relationship with God and subsequent healing. “If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.”<sup>95</sup> Having a contrite heart, open to receive the purification of God, is what is needed for one earnestly seeking miraculous relief from their painful sufferings.

One of the most important aspects of Edward Wimberly’s discernment model, dealing with the proper recourse for obtaining divine holistic healing for those in pain, is the acknowledgment of the Holy Spirit. Wimberly points out that in addition to establishing a relationship with God, there must be an acknowledgment of His presence through the Holy Spirit.

Although the discernment model emphasizes holistic healing, it also takes human suffering very seriously. For the modern mind, suffering often is interpreted as the absence of God. Yet in following the discernment model God’s presence is lifted up in the midst of human suffering. It is important to lift up the biblical and theological basis for discerning God’s presence in the midst of suffering. Romans 8:26 serves as the focal point of the theology of discernment because it conveys a realistic view of suffering and of God’s presence in the midst of suffering. In Romans 8:26, weakness refers to human suffering. Prayer is viewed as the Spirit’s intercession on our behalf at a depth level. The spirit works even in the midst of suffering and pain in this Pauline view of the Holy Spirit. We can

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<sup>94</sup> Chandra S. Linton, *The Blessing In Disguise: A Powerful Testimony Unto God That Answers The Question, “Can Any Good Come Out Of Your Troubles?”* (Bloomington, IN: AuthorHouse, 2011), 44.

<sup>95</sup> NIV, 2 Chronicles 7:14.

have confidence that God is present in the midst of suffering, working on our behalf through God's Spirit.<sup>96</sup>

Wimberly, in the above mentioned quote, helps to further expound upon the power of reverencing God through the Holy Spirit. "In all your ways, acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight."<sup>97</sup> Whenever there is sincere reverence to God, there is also a wonderful exchange of God's merciful grace that envelops those who trust in Him through His son, Jesus Christ.

Jesus liberated people from the powers and principalities of disease, social illness, and religious manipulation through performing miracles that released people from their bondage of suffering. Jesus' miracles involved the expulsion of demons. The Letter to the Ephesians describes the evil powers well: "For our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places" (Eph. 6:12). Jesus came to release the ill-treated from destitution, injustice, fear, exploitation, religious legalism, and evil powers. Healing and deliverance are inseparable. By healing the sick and the hurt, he delivered them from bondage. His healing and deliverance served the purpose of his proclamation for the advancement of God's reign on earth. Jesus' ministry put the accent on the healing of the wounded and the deliverance of the downtrodden by resolving the *han*.<sup>98</sup>

From Andrew S. Park's, *The Wounded Heart of God*,<sup>99</sup> an introduction of *han* is expressed. As Park continued to build upon his definition of hope deferred, his insightfulness further expanded his research and redefined the *han* experience with the following:

What is *han*? In Korean, *han* is a deep, unhealed wound of a victim that festers in her or him. It can be a social, economic, political, physical,

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<sup>96</sup> Wimberly, *Prayer in Pastoral Counseling*, 12.

<sup>97</sup> NIV, Proverbs 3:6.

<sup>98</sup> Andrew Sung Park, *Triune Atonement: Christ's Healing for Sinners, Victims, And The Whole Creation* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2009), 44.

<sup>99</sup> Andrew S. Park, *The Wounded Heart of God: The Asian Concept of Han and the Christian Doctrine of Sin* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1993).

mental, or spiritual wound generated by political oppression, economic exploitation, social alienation, cultural contempt, injustice, poverty, or war. It may be deep ache, an intense bitterness, or the sense of helplessness, hopelessness, or resignation at the individual and collective levels.<sup>100</sup>

This insightful perspective is what has helped to bring new meaning to the various facets of pain and suffering. With new observations in a particular area, there are typically new developments and theories concerning its relevant changes. Nevertheless, for the theologian, the answer to the questions surrounding pain and suffering is found in God the Father, through his son, Jesus Christ.

Sometimes this life on earth brings so much pain and so much sorrow. And sometimes we may even question God's love. The Pain is so great! And we may think God, if you love me why are you letting this happen or why did you let this happen to me. Where is your Love? You know there really are no easy answers. We can't always explain every little detail of our lives. And sometimes we have so many questions. But I can tell you this much, God loves you and he is there! He is the Answer! Jesus is the Answer! He is the only one that can take away that pain. Maybe you have lost a loved one through death and right now you are filled with so much sorrow. You have so many questions. You may be confused. You had so many plans. And you might even feel hurt and angry that death has come and you feel so lost and empty, with no hope and no direction now. You may have even thought what is the use for me going on anymore. And the pain and sorrow may be just too much for you to bear. Jesus knows, and he carried that sorrow for you. When Jesus walked that road to Golgotha carrying that cross, that weighed so heavy on him, it was for you! All of your sorrows, all of your grief, were what that cross represent for you!<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> Andrew Sung Park, *Triune Atonement: Christ's Healing For Sinners, Victims, And The Whole Creation* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2009), 39.

<sup>101</sup> Sheryl Marie McDonald, *There is Hope* (Bloomington, IN: WestBow Press, 2012), 115.



## CHAPTER FOUR

### METHODOLOGY

The focus of this chapter is to describe the research method of testing used to investigate the hypothesis of this project. There are several ways in which to test theory in order to observe its range of effects. One of the many ways with which to test a proposed technique is through the quantitative method. The quantitative method is most often associated with observations that are measurable through numeric language. “Quantitative research is explaining phenomena by collecting numerical data that are analyzed using mathematically based methods (in particular statistics).”<sup>1</sup> This classic method of data collection includes control and variable groups with the optional use of grid, chart, or graph instrumentation. “Observations are the key to quantitative research methods. Measuring observations is the task of quantitative research. But knowing that your observations are quantifiable and constitute real evidence is no simple matter.”<sup>2</sup> From percentages, to ratios, this method of testing helps to communicate findings through rigid numeric calculations.

Another way by which to test theory is by observation through the qualitative method. This traditional method of experimentation utilizes the more subjective means of

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<sup>1</sup> Daniel Muijs, *Doing Quantitative Research in Education with SPSS, Second Edition* (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2011), 1.

<sup>2</sup> Mark Balnaves, and Peter Caputi, *Introduction to Quantitative Research Methods: An Investigative Approach* (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2001), 33.

observation. “Qualitative research methods are methods for the collection, analysis and interpretation of data on phenomena that are not easily reduced to numbers or that might be destroyed by any attempt to do so.”<sup>3</sup> Typically, this method captures information gathered through individualized, non-uniformed opinions. These opinions are most often gathered through interviews; collected from experiences, seminars, sermons, or speeches that are later evaluated through surveys which allude to personal commentary.

Qualitative data are defined as detailed descriptions of situations, events, people, interactions, observed behaviors, direct quotations from people about their experiences, attitudes, beliefs, and thoughts and excerpts or entire passages from documents, correspondence, records, and case histories. Theory’s place in qualitative methods is quite different from that in quantitative methods.<sup>4</sup>

The goal of the qualitative method is to present the information gathered among the majority and minority remarks or sentiments shared among the test/focus group. Through this testing method, research is qualified. This research, however, employed two research designs, a combination of quantitative and qualitative research. The first design is a quasi-experimental, one group pre-test post-test design, a quantitative research that was used to determine the pre- and post-test results in the painful experience rating scale. The test results of this experiment will show the difference of the participant’s transformation, indicating the effectiveness of the ministry model.

According to Polit and Beck, “quasi-experiments involve the manipulation of an independent variable that is an intervention.”<sup>5</sup> In this study, the intervention was the

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<sup>3</sup> Colin Bradley, “Qualitative v. quantitative research methods” *Research Methods in Primary Care* (Abingdon, OX: Radcliffe Medical Press Ltd, 1997), 31.

<sup>4</sup> Isadore Newman, and Carolyn R. Benz, *Qualitative-Quantitative Research Methodology: Exploring the Interactive Continuum* (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1998), 16 and 17.

<sup>5</sup>Denise F. Polit, and Cheryl Tatano Beck, *Essentials of Nursing Research: Appraising Evidence for Nursing Practice* (Riverwood, IL: Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, 2009), 254.

Transformative Ministry Program which the researcher developed. The design for this model is illustrated as follows:

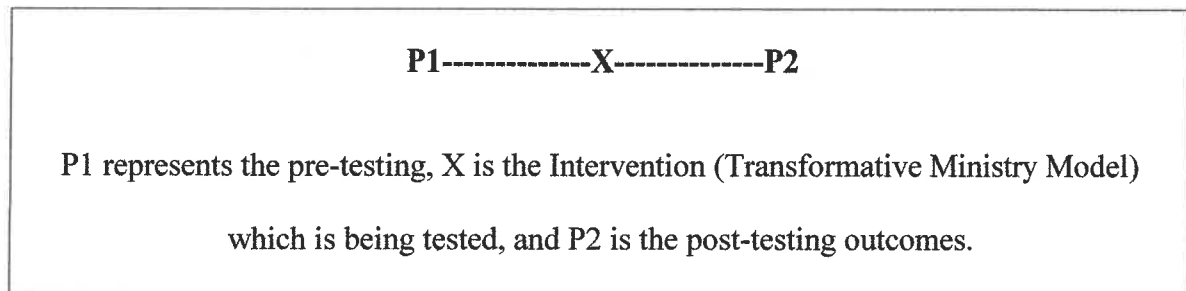


Figure 1: This formula presents how the Quasi-Experimental Design was used

The second design is a qualitative phenomenology that was used to determine the participants' account of their painful life experiences. The intent of a phenomenology is to describe the essence of the pain experience by participants who are considered as experts in the topic addressed by this research. The design is illustrated as follows:

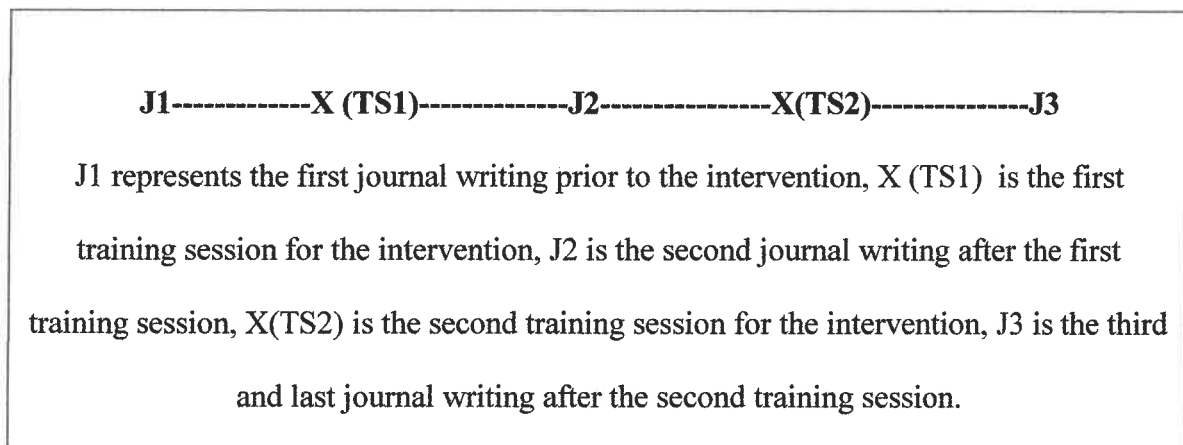


Figure 2: This formula presents how the Phenomenological Design was used

The hypothesis for this project is a prediction about the relationship between variables: those experiencing pain, and those who have transitioned into wholeness. The hypothesis tested in this study states that individuals who went through painful life experiences are able to convert brokenness into wholeness after attending or participating

in the ministry model set forth by the writer. The ministry model for this project consists of each member of the writer's context group participating in various educational seminars, workshops, and listening to pointed sermons to lift the awareness of pain: its origin and its remedy.

The researcher's context group is comprised of persons who are members of the Mount Zion Baptist church located in Arlington, Virginia. The hypothesis tested in this study demonstrates individuals who went through painful life experiences and was able to convert their brokenness into wholeness after both attending and participating in this ministry model.

The researcher has named the intervention tested in this study as the "Transformative Ministry Model." This ministry model was formulated by the researcher with the intent to assist Christian clergy and laity to find God in their own pain experiences. Additionally, the goal of this research is prove that these individuals will transition from their pain, into a restorative wholeness. This change in the individual showcases an allowance for God to use them in the transformative ministry whether in a church or military setting. This model is comprised of two training sessions covering the following topics:

1. Pain, the Birthing Place for a New Beginning
2. Goal Setting and Mental Imaging
3. The Blessing of Adversity
4. Embracing Wholeness

The training sessions emphasized knowing the biblical truth concerning how God responds to the cries of his people. These sessions also explored how God manifests His love through our pain (*Pain, the Birthing Place for a New Beginning*). The strategy used in the program was expository preaching and teaching. This particular style of sharing is

one which ministers to the whole person for the purpose of transforming the lives of those who experience painful life events. This transformative approach begins with the process of renewing the mind in order that it may receive spiritual information from the Word of God (*Goal Setting, and Mental Imaging*).

The mind is where information is processed and integrated in the way a person feels, communicates, behaves, and deals with life events. This spiritual information puts individuals in right relationship with God (*The Blessing of Adversity*) which in return places individuals in a right relationship with themselves and others. Therefore, the whole person: both their spiritual and mental states become receptive and sensitive to Biblical Truth. This spiritual truth then serves as the only resource dealing with life's challenges such as pain experiences and in ministering to others who may be experiencing the grip of pain (*Embracing Wholeness*).

The following is a training session agenda outline that was utilized during the research:

## Session I and II Outline Identifying the Pain

### “Moving The Wounded To Wholeness”

Opening Prayer	11:00 a.m.	Reverend Campbell
Welcome	11:05 a.m.	Reverend Campbell
Introduction	11:05-11:10 a.m.	Reverend Campbell
Survey Questions	11:10-11:30 a.m.	Reverend Campbell
<b>(Pain Experience Survey)</b>		
Session I	11:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m.	Dr. Ballard
<b>(Pain, the Birthing Place for a New Beginning)</b>		
Session II	12:10-12:40 p.m.	Reverend Campbell
<b>(Goal Setting, Mental Imaging)</b>		
Closing Remarks	12:50-12:55 p.m.	Reverend Campbell

Along with the above mentioned training sessions were three significant sermonic presentations dealing on the topic of pain:

1. *It's About to Get Better*, by Dr. Leonard N. Smith
2. *Transform Pain Into Praise*, Dr. Leonard N. Smith
3. *Why the Scars?* By Dr. Charles Booth

A copy of the sermonic presentations is located in the Appendix B and C portions of this project. Instructional methods and materials used during the conduct of the Transformative Ministry Model were the Bible, sermonic presentations, interactive sessions, PowerPoint presentations, and group dynamic activities. Refer to appendix E for the training guides, schedules, and materials.

The detailed description of the data gathered utilizing these two designs are as follows:

1. Participants were recruited using a purposive sampling technique where the following selection criteria were met by the participants:
  - a. must have experienced at least one painful life event;
  - b. serving in at least one church ministry;
  - c. must be willing to participate in all of the activities conducted by the researcher;
  - d. and must be willing to engage at some point in a church and/or military-based transformative ministry which is the intended output of this dissertation.
2. Invitation letters stating the research purpose, content, and methods were sent to the intended participants. Refer to Appendix E on page \_\_\_\_ for sample of the invitation letter.
3. On day 1 of the Transformative Ministry Model, the participants:
  - a. took a pre-test with the use of the Painful Experience Rating Scale (P1)
  - b. wrote their first pain experience journal (J1)
4. A detailed orientation to the Transformative Ministry Model was conducted by the researcher
5. The intervention (Transformative Ministry Model) was tested through the conduct of 2 training sessions and 3 journal writing. Details of the program is discussed in the succeeding section of this chapter.
6. One journal writing (J2) was a homework which participants were expected to do in between training sessions.
7. On the last day of the Transformative Ministry Model, the participants:

- a. took a post-test with the use of the Painful Experience Rating Scale (P2)
- b. wrote their third pain experience journal (J3)

The participant's journals are shown in Appendices I, J, and K. The statistical data sheet is shown in Appendix L.

The following Table 1 shows a profile of the participants in terms of demographics and pain descriptors:

TABLE 1 PARTICIPANTS' PROFILE (n=13)					
I. DEMOGRAPHICAL DATA			II. PAIN EXPERIENCE DESCRIPTORS		
AGE	Frequency	Percentage	THINKS OF PAIN	Frequency	Percentage
20-39			almost everyday	6	45%
40-59	9	69%	occasionally	4	36%
60-79	3	23%	rarely	3	19%
80 and above	1	8%	never		
GENDER	Frequency	Percentage	SOURCES OF PAIN: multiple	Frequency	Percentage
Male	3	23%	Death of a love one	7	54%
Female	10	77%	Loss of a job	3	23%
			Divorce/ Broken Rel't	7	54%
EDUCATION			Physical Illness	2	15%
High School	1	8%	Financial Crisis	4	30%
Associate Degree	2	15%	Others, pls specify	3	23%
College Degree	7	54%			
Post Graduate	3	23%			
			MANIFESTATIONS	Frequency	Percentage
			Yes	10	77%
			No	1	8%
			Not sure	2	15%
II. PAIN EXPERIENCE DESCRIPTORS			(yes)MANIFESTATIONS : Multiple answers to YEs		
TIMING	Frequency	Percentage			
Within last 3 years	7	54%	sleeplessness	4	30%
Within last 5 years	1	8%	indulgence	3	23%
Within last 10 years	2	15%	loss of interest	5	28%
more than 10 years	3	23%	avoidance	4	30%
			blaming God	2	15%
			blaming self / others	2/2	15%/15%

There were two instruments used in the data gathering. One was the Painful Experience Rating Scale, which is a two-part questionnaire developed by the researcher primarily for this study. The instrument's contents were based on the following:

1. researcher's personal pain experiences
2. researcher's observations and interactions during ministry works, in the church and in the military
3. theories and concepts from reviewed literatures
4. contributions of experts in painful life experiences

First part of the questionnaire consists of participants' demographical and painful experience profile. Second part consists of 20-item indicators of the transformative process "brokenness to wholeness."

Response options are on a 5 point scale as follows: Strongly Agree, Agree, Not Sure, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree. Items were developed and organized according to the main concepts in the researcher's conceptual framework.

Another instrument was the *Painful Life Experience Journal*, which is a free-willing documentation based on a stem question generated by the researcher. The stem questions were as follows:

- Journal 1: Describe your personal pain experience
- Journal 2: What is the Lord telling you regarding your pain experience?
- Journal 3: What does "moving on mean to you" in reference to your pain experience?

These instruments were pilot-tested for face validity to individuals belonging to the general population, outside the sampling population. Reliability of contents was checked through topic experts. Data was treated using qualitative processing and was the basis for finalizing the tool. Sample Journal Sheet is shown on Appendix H.

The pre-test and post-test scores were compared in all of the 20 items to determine the differences and to see if scores were higher in the post-test. The



differences were the basis for reviewing the program and enhancing where needed. The following is a sample of both the pre- and post-test survey:

Instructions: Check on the space that corresponds to the option that best applies to you. The response options are: Strongly Agree, Agree, Not Sure, Disagree, Strongly Disagree					
Pain Experience Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. Life's suffering makes an individual a better person.					
2. When life is at its worst, I know that the best is about to begin.					
3. Failures open doors to success					
4. What's coming is always better than what was					
5. There is always something good that the painful past brings					
6. God allows His children to be tempted by Satan through painful experiences					
7. A painful experience is a blessing in disguise					
8. God is definitely not in painful experiences					
9. God allows painful experiences to bless us					
10. A painful experience is a hindrance to life and joy					
11. All solutions to problems can be found in the bible					
12. When I am in pain, I know that God understands if I miss worship services					
13. It is fine to isolate myself from Christian friends when I am in pain.					
14. Frequently talking about our pains is helpful					
15. The first to know about my pains is my spouse (or my best friend as may be applicable)					
16. It is possible to be completely healed from painful experiences					
17. There is always a part of our painful experiences which will continue to haunt us					
18. I feel that I had been a victim of a painful past					
19. I can freely talk about my painful past without feeling any hurt at all					
20. Because of my painful experiences, I consider myself victorious					

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **FIELD EXPERIENCE**

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the data collection process whereby the researcher's ministry model was tested. The "Transformative Ministry Model" is the name the writer has decided to title this theory being tested to show the transition hurting people have experienced after having attended this training. In order to appropriately define the outcomes of the test, the researcher has captured the pre-testing results for comparative purposes.

Even the most carefully designed questionnaires sometimes include items that respondents find ambiguous or difficult to comprehend. Questionnaires may also include items that respondents understand perfectly well, but interpret differently than the researcher intended. Because of this, questionnaire pretesting is conducted to detect and repair such problems. Pretesting can also provide information about probable response rates of a survey, the cost and timeframe of the data collection, the effectiveness of the field organization, and the skill level of the data collection staff. A number of pretesting methods have been developed, each of which has advantages and disadvantages.<sup>1</sup>

The pre-test was distributed among the researcher's participants prior to attending the scheduled ministry model events. This quantitative data collection comprised of the Painful Experience Rating Scale and the Pain Experience journaling, administered by the researcher. This pre-test was aimed at capturing the participant's pain

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<sup>1</sup> Harry T. Reis, and Charles M. Judd, *Handbook of Research Methods In Social And Personality Psychology* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 241.

experiences prior to the training sessions. The pre-test portion of this field experience revealed the following:

PRE-TEST RESULTS		
PAINFUL EXPERIENCE (BROKENNESS TO WHOLENESS)		
WEIGHTED MEAN AVERAGE-WMA (n=13 )		
PAIN AS OPPORTUNITY FOR NEW BEGINNINGS	WMA INTERPRETATION	SUBTOTAL WMA INTERPRETATION
1. Life's suffering makes an individual a better person.	4.38 (agree)	4.18 (agree)
2. When life is at its worst, I know that the best is about to begin.	4.15 (agree)	
3. Failures open doors to success	4.23 (agree)	
4. What's coming is always better than what was	3.76 (not sure)	
5. There is always something good that the painful past brings	4.38 (agree)	
ADVERSITY AS A BLESSING	WMA INTERPRETATION	SUBTOTAL WMA INTERPRETATION
6. God allows His children to be tempted by Satan through painful experiences	3.84 (not sure)	3.54 (not sure)
7. A painful experience is a blessing in disguise	2.61 (disagree)	
8. God is definitely in painful experiences***	3.61(not sure)	
9. God allows painful experiences to bless us	4.07 (agree)	
10. A painful experience is not a hindrance to life and joy***	3.61 (not sure)	
SETTING PERSONAL GOALS	WMA INTERPRETATION	SUBTOTAL WMA INTERPRETATION
11. All solutions to problems can be found in the bible	4.38 (agree)	3.81 (not sure)
12. My being in pain is not an excuse for me to miss worship services***	2.38 (disagree)	
13. It is not fine to isolate myself from Christian friends when I am in pain.***	4.15 (agree)	
14. Frequently talking about our pains is helpful	4.23 (agree)	
15. The first to know about my pains is my spouse (or my best friend as may be applicable)	3.92 (not sure)	
EMBRACING WHOLENESS	WMA INTERPRETATION	SUBTOTAL WMA INTERPRETATION
16. It is possible to be completely healed from painful experiences	4.00 (agree)	3.29 (not sure)
17. Past painful experiences can completely be healed, thus cannot continue to haunt us***	2.07 (disagree)	
18. I don't feel I am a victim of a painful past***	3.15 (not sure)	
19. I can freely talk about my painful past without feeling any hurt at all	3.23 (not sure)	
20. Because of my painful experiences, I consider myself victorious	4.00 (agree)	
*** items that had been re-stated and reverse-scored		

There are four major concepts in the researcher's framework as follows: 1. pain is an experience which affords an individual the opportunity for new beginnings; 2. adversities in life can be a blessing; 3. setting personal goals and visualizing them is important; and 4. it is possible to embrace "wholeness" despite painful experiences that an individual has gone through in life. These concepts serve as the skeleton for the Transformative Ministry Program model, as well as the quantitative and qualitative instruments used to collect data in this research study.

The pre-test results show a weighted mean average of participants who agreed to the idea that: "pain experiences are opportunities for new beginnings." Results showed, however, that these same participants were not sure if "adversities in life can be a blessing," nor if "setting personal goals and visualizing them is important when going through life experiences." This pre-test also divulged that this context group was not sure that it is possible to "embrace wholeness in spite of going through painful experiences."

Under the first sub-heading of the pre-test: "pain as an opportunity for new beginnings," there were five statements which participants responded to. The participants agreed that life's suffering makes an individual a better person (WMA=4.38). For believers in Christ who have a scripturally grounded belief in God, there should be no doubt in their minds that God causes all things including suffering to work out for one's good.<sup>2</sup>

The participants collectively agreed to the statement, "when life is at its worst, I know that the best is about to begin," revealing a weighted mean average of 4.15. Dr. Leonard Smith's Sunday (March 3, 2012) sermon presentation titled "Surviving Your Valleys," addressed this very statement. Dr. Smith encouraged the listening participants

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<sup>2</sup> NIV, Romans 8:28.

to “Refresh yourself by removing all self-defeating thoughts; relocate yourself where God has ordered you to go; and remind yourself to go out and stand on the mountain top during your trials.”

The participants agreed that (WMA= 4.23) “failures open doors to success.” In the next statement, “what’s coming is always better than what was,” the majority of participants answered “not sure” (WMA=3.76). It is interesting to observe this particular response from the participants, as the Bible provides several promises with certainty of better days ahead for the Believer. Several verses confirming this truth include, but are not limited to: Psalm 30:5; Psalm 16:11; and John 15:11, to list a few. From these verses along, it appears that the requirement for a believer to accept the statement “what’s coming is always better than what was,” is to accept the promises of God.

The participants collectively agreed that “there is always something good that the painful past brings” (WMA=4.38). Many stories have been told of how the pain of one’s past has brought about something good. One powerful biblical story to further confirm this statement is chronicled in Genesis. Joseph’s remark to his brothers who did him harm was, “You meant to hurt me, but God turned your evil into good to save the lives of many people, which is being done. So don’t be afraid, I will take care of you and your children.”<sup>3</sup> Joseph comforted his brothers and spoke kind words to them. The harm that Joseph’s brothers inflicted upon him was reciprocated with love and not vengeance.

All five of the statements under the section, “adversity as blessing” in this section of the questionnaire indicated “not sure” responses except for one item which is “God allows painful experiences to bless us” rendered a weighted mean average of 4.07.

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<sup>3</sup> NIV, Genesis 50:20-23.

The first item “God allows His children to be tempted by Satan through painful experiences garnered a WMA of 3.84, interpreted as “not sure.” The word “tempt means to try, to prove, or put to the test.”<sup>4</sup> Temptation, on the other hand, is defined as “trials with beneficial purpose and effect.”<sup>5</sup> There are a number of stories in the bible which illustrates that God allows Satan to tempt His children. One such story is Job’s, written in the Book of Job 1:8-22. This reading illustrates how God has allowed Satan to tempt His servant Job. In all the trials and sufferings Job had to go through, he did not sin nor charge God with wrong. Job’s story is an explication of how God allows His children to be tempted.

From the statement, “a painful experience is a blessing in disguise,” the participants collectively disagreed (WMA=2.61). Painful experiences and distressing conditions are hurtful, and it is easy to understand why even believers in Christ would be taken aback with the said statement. We often hear remarks, however, of people who try to console a pregnant woman in labor saying “it won’t be long, bear the pain for without this, you won’t experience the joy of being a mother.” Some people who vigorously exercise to lose weight are heard saying: “there is no gain, without the pain.” These few examples serve as secular implementations of spiritual principles. When Paul reminds the believers of this principle as he declares: “for Christ’s sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.”<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Randy H. Bunyard, *The Walk* (Maitland, FL: Xulon Press, 2005), 20.

<sup>5</sup> Pierre Noel Dutes, Sr., *Dynamic Power Through Prayer: A Solution-Focused Prayer Manual* (Bloomington, IN: Xlibris Corporation, 2010), 150.

<sup>6</sup> NIV, 2 Corinthians 12:10.

When the statement, “God is definitely in painful experiences,” was re-stated in positive form, the participants likewise responded “not sure” (WMA=3.61). The participants’ responses appear to be consistent with Jacob’s story. The story of Jacob illustrates God being a guiding force during a person’s painful experience. Genesis 31:38-42 is a confrontation between Jacob and Laban, these verses indicates that no matter what Jacob went through serving Laban, God was always with him. Jacob said to Laban “I served you fourteen years for your two daughters and six years for your flock and you have changed my wages ten times. If the God of my father, the God of Abraham and the Fear of Isaac, had not been with me, you would surely have sent me away empty-handed. But God has seen my hardship and the toil of my hands.”<sup>7</sup> Jacob’s discourse with Laban clearly illustrates that God is definitely in the midst of our pain and in our difficult times.

The researcher’s participants collectively agreed (WMA=4.07) with the statement, “God allows painful experiences to bless us.” However, when re-stated, the participants collectively responded “not sure” to “a painful experience is a not a hindrance to life and joy” (WMA=3.61). To cite a Biblical example concerning the statement, “painful experiences are never a hindrance to life and joy,” the researcher points to what Jesus himself said in the book of John: “I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”<sup>8</sup> Tribulation, according to Lenya Heitzig, means “pressure, affliction, or distress.”<sup>9</sup> While, on the other hand, being of good cheer means “to have good courage;

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<sup>7</sup> NIV, Genesis 31:41 and 42.

<sup>8</sup> NIV, John 16:33.

to be full of hope.”<sup>10</sup> When we put our trust in God, He can give us courage in the midst of the distress. And while we have God's favorable presence, we are able to maintain happiness, even while the world forsakes us.

The weighted mean average of 3.81 for the five statements under the concept “Setting Goals as Being Important,” collectively was “unsure.” This information indicates that the participants are not sure about how they feel about all of the corresponding statements pertinent to “setting goals as being an important part of overcoming pain.” For someone who has a personal relationship with Jesus, setting personal goals means aligning one’s life to God’s divine will. The participants did agree, however, that all solutions to problems can be found in the Bible (WMA=4.38). This finding is consistent with the claim of Dr. Kelvin McCune. In his book, *Theology for Practical Christian Living*, he stated: “the bible is the source of all truth and is the standard by which we can discern what is true and what is false.”<sup>11</sup> The Word of God is our manual for life. It reveals how the Christian should live. It is important to trust the Word of God for accomplishing God’s purpose in our life.

On the statement, “when I am in pain, I know that God understands if I miss worship services,” the weighted mean score was 2.38, which means that the participants disagree with this statement. The responses of the participants indicate their awareness of where they need to be during these challenging moments. If there is any place that a Christian needs to be while experiencing pain, it is in the presence of God and among

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<sup>9</sup> Lenya Heitzig, and Penny Rose, *Live Deeply: A Study In The Parables Of Jesus* (Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook, 2009), 252.

<sup>10</sup> Albert Barnes, *Barnes’ Notes On The New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1962), 848.

<sup>11</sup> Kelvin M. McCune, *Theology For Practical Christian Living: Cultivating A Closer Relationship With Our Lord Jesus Christ* (Maitland, FL: Xulon Press, 2008), 366.



other fellow-believers in Christ. The Lord always has a Word for those who follow His command.

From the statement, “It is not fine to isolate myself from Christian friends when I am in pain,” the weighted mean average is 4.15 qualitatively interpreted as an agreement to the statement. The participants may have realized the importance of being with believers during life’s trying moments. Christian friends can be a source of consolation and a source of encouragement for those who are experiencing suffering. Christian believers are able to pray and encourage their hurting friends with the Word of God. One of the many Bible verses which serves as an excellent support for the above statement further encourages believers to continue to fellowship together states: “not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.”<sup>12</sup>

The participants agreed that “frequently talking about our pains is helpful,” with a weighted mean average of 4.23. Talking about one’s pain can be a form of cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT). CBT sessions focus on people’s thoughts and behaviors used for persons experiencing anxiety. This is a type of therapy allowing a person to discuss in detail and/or to confront with specificity that which is causing the anxiety.

Cognitive Therapy has also been shown to be effective in the treatment of medical conditions such as insomnia, infertility, fibromyalgia, chronic pain, irritable bowel syndrome, erectile dysfunction, obesity, premenstrual syndrome, and migraine headaches. The therapy has been adapted and its efficacy demonstrated in individual and group treatment, for children and adolescents, for adults and older adults, and for couples and families.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> NIV, Hebrews 10:25.

<sup>13</sup> Irving B. Weiner, and W. Edward Craighead, *The Corsini Encyclopedia Of Psychology, Volume 1* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2010), 353.

In CBT, a facilitator helps a client by identifying negative beliefs with the purpose of changing behaviors. The Bible, being a perfect source of information, also supports talking about pain as progressive method. Speaking about our pain may serve another purpose other than therapy; it can also be a form of testimony, a witnessing of God's goodness despite what one goes through. One such verse in the Bible states: "I do not hide your righteousness in my heart; I speak of your faithfulness and salvation. I do not conceal your love and your truth from the great assembly."<sup>14</sup>

With a WMA of 3.92, the participants answered "not sure" of the statement: "the spouse should be the first to know about one's pain." While it is true that spouses and family members are good sources of support for an ailing person, there is such a thing as a "caregiver burnout."

Caregiver burnout is a state of physical, emotional, and mental exhaustion that may be accompanied by a change in attitude from positive and caring to negative and unconcerned. Caregivers may find it hard to relax, experience changes in sleeping patterns, and suffer from scattered thinking and increasing thoughts of death. May caregivers also feel guilty if they spend time on themselves, rather than on their ill or elderly loved ones.<sup>15</sup>

Because of the experience of "burn-out" the spouse may not be in the best position to help the person in pain. This is the reason why the best person to hear the cry of those who are suffering is God. Believers are encouraged to speak to God concerning all they are going through, for example, Jesus says: "come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy

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<sup>14</sup> NIV, Psalm 40:10.

<sup>15</sup> Prem P. Gogia, and Nirek Rastogi, *Clinical Alzheimer Rehabilitation* (New York: Springer Publishing Company, LLC, 2009), 197.

and my burden is light.”<sup>16</sup> God is able, as He can hear our pleas, our cries, and even our complaints without Him taking it against us.

Intimacy with God is often borne out of affliction. “God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth gives way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea.”<sup>17</sup> During times of suffering, one experiences God at a deep and more profound level. To further this discussion, the researcher turned to the Apostle Paul who wrote to the Philippians in the same manner: “I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, and so, somehow to attain to the resurrection from the death.”<sup>18</sup> Thus it is by all means possible to experience “wholeness” despite one’s “brokenness.” The participants WMA=3.29 rating indicated their uncertainty of the statement: “it is possible to embrace wholeness after a painful life experience.”

On the first statement however, the participants agreed (WMA=4.00) that it is possible to be completely healed from painful experiences. The Bible tells of stories which indicate the possibility of being healed completely from past and painful experiences.

Asaph’s story can clearly illustrate this statement. Asaph was David's music director, and probably wrote much of the original, now lost, music for David's Psalms, but more importantly, he wrote approximately twelve chapters within the book of Psalms. Asaph was a young priest from the tribe of Levi, when David brought the Ark of the Covenant up to Jerusalem in about 1000 to 995 BC. His father, Berekiah was appointed Doorkeeper of the Ark, and Asaph was so talented that David put him in charge of the music before the Ark of the Covenant. He was assisted there by his brother Zechariah, who was assassinated during the time of

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<sup>16</sup> NIV, Matthew 11:28-30.

<sup>17</sup> NIV, Psalms 46:1-2.

<sup>18</sup> NIV, Philippians 3:10-11.

Solomon. Asaph, however went through a lot of trials and challenges during the time of Solomon. It is interesting to note that the psalmist closes with the only appropriate response to this new perception of life's circumstances and that is to praise and worship the Sovereign God.<sup>19</sup>

Asaph's life illustrates that complete healing is possible in the context of a relationship with God. The statement, "past painful experiences can completely be healed, thus cannot continue to haunt us," the revealed WMA=2.07 of participants who disagreed. In essence, the response indicates that participants believe that there will always be something from the past painful experience which will continue to disturb us, in spite of healing. Asaph's story is captured by these words: "whom have I in heaven but you? And earth has nothing I desire besides you. My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever."<sup>20</sup> Asaph found that the problem of pain served to reverse his priorities, as his thoughts were redirected to something better. "Initially Asaph saw prosperity as the highest good, and to be sought at any cost before he experienced sufferings. After what he went through Asaph saw the nearness of God to be the ultimate good, and worth the cost of suffering, pain, and death."<sup>21</sup> This excerpt from Asaph's story shows that pain does not have to haunt us forever, but rather, pain can be forgotten once we find a new meaning in our relationship with God.

The participants responded "not sure" to whether or not they "are victims of a painful past," (WMA=3.15).

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<sup>19</sup> Richard Thompson, *Who was Asaph?* ([http://www.hfcbiblestudy.org/index2.php?option=com\\_content&do\\_pdf=1&id=482](http://www.hfcbiblestudy.org/index2.php?option=com_content&do_pdf=1&id=482)), accessed September 17, 2011.

<sup>20</sup> NIV, Psalm 73:25-26.

<sup>21</sup> "Pain and the Presence of God (Psalm 73) (death of a young mother)" From the Series, *Messages For Unique Funeral Situations* (<http://bible.org/seriespage/pain-and-presence-god-psalm-73-death-young-mother>), accessed May 07, 2012.

A review of the definitions of “victim,” listed in the American Heritage Dictionary, illustrates the breadth of the accepted meaning of the term “victim”: 1. someone who is put to death or subjected to torture or suffering by another; 2. Its original meaning was rooted in the idea of sacrifice or scapegoat—the execution or casting out of a person or animal to satisfy a deity or hierarchy, a living creature slain and offered as sacrifice to a deity or as part of a religious sacrifice; and 3. Anyone who is harmed by or made to suffer from an act, circumstance, circumstance agency or condition: victims of war.”<sup>22</sup>

In the qualitative portion of this paper, it can be noted that the participants source of pain varied from physical to emotional and involving both circumstantial and self-infliction as the cause of pain. A person who goes through a painful experience does not necessarily have to end up as a victim, but rather, they have the ability of becoming a victor. “‘Because he loves me,’ says the Lord, ‘I will rescue him; I will protect him, for he acknowledged my name. He will call on me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble, I will deliver him and honor him. With long life I will satisfy him and show him my salvation.’”<sup>23</sup>

The participants answered “not sure” (WMA=3.23) when asked if they can “freely talk about their painful past without feeling any hurt at all.” Pain does not necessarily leave us continuously nurturing the hurt long after the pain is gone. Suffering refines us. We can read in the Book of Isaiah where God said: “...I have refined you, though not as silver; I have tested you in the furnace of affliction.”<sup>24</sup> The meaning of this verse makes it clear that pain and suffering have a way of bringing our strengths and weaknesses to the surface. When the dross floats to the surface, God skims it off; he

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<sup>22</sup> Prakash Talwar, *Victimology* (Adarsh Nagar, Delhi: Isha Books, 2006), 20.

<sup>23</sup> NIV, Psalm 91:14-16.

<sup>24</sup> NIV, Isaiah 48:10.

purifies and refines us to be the radiant bride of Christ. Christ being in our lives, allows us to speak about our painful past without feeling the hurt.

The participants agree that they are victorious because of their painful past (WMA=4.00). Suffering conforms us into God's image: "and we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters."<sup>25</sup> We may be tempted to read these verses to say that God will bring good out of everything. While He can and does redeem pain in our lives, these verses speak of being conformed to God's image through our suffering.

As a part of testing the ministry model, the researcher asked the participants to write a journal about their pain experience. Each participant was asked to candidly describe their pain experience. A pain experience, according to this research model design, is the totality of what happened (the cause of the pain), emotional responses that go with the pain, insights, lessons learned, and for a believer in Christ, it is reasonable that the described pain experience include God's role in the whole pain experience.

Crabtree and Miller describe three major qualitative data analysis styles. "These three organizing styles are template, editing, and immersion/crystallization."<sup>26</sup> The Editing Analysis Style is used in this research. The researcher acted as the interpreter who read through the data in search of meaningful segments which became the basis for developing categorization schemes. The researcher then searched for the pattern and

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<sup>25</sup> NIV, Romans 8:28-29.

<sup>26</sup> William L. Miller, and Benjamin F. Crabtree, *Doing Qualitative Research Second Edition* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc., 1999), 21.

structure that connected the thematic categories. This particular style is commonly used in a phenomenological study.

There were a total of thirteen journals collected from participants. Going through the journals one by one was a labor intensive activity. From the researcher's experience reading through the journals, the activity required conceptual sensitivity, sheer hard work, and creativity. It had been a real challenge for three reasons: 1. the researcher labored to be objective and not to infuse his own views on the data collected, in order to enhance trustworthiness not only for the data themselves but also of the analysis and interpretation; 2. the enormous amount of work required to organize the data and make sense of numerous pages of narrative transcriptions; and 3. was reducing the data for reporting purposes. The researcher attempted to present the organized data in tabulated form, striking balance between conciseness and richness and evidentiary value of the data.

Based on journal # 1 (prior to the administration of the Transformative Ministry Program) three themes from clusters obtained from the participants' description of pain as follows : 1) pain is described according to how the participants responded to the painful life experience; 2) pain is described according to the impact of the painful experience on their lives; and 3) pain is described according to how the participants tried to manage their pain.

The foregoing discussions are structured according to the three themes identified. The information obtained from the participants' journals, labeled as collected data, pointed out to specific clusters.

Under this theme, there were three clusters as follows: dwelling on pain; letting go; and blaming self, others, and/or God.

The following Table shows the qualitative data on the cluster **responses to pain**.

PRE-TEST RESULTS PAIN EXPERIENCES' QUALITATIVE DATA Responses to Pain (N=13)		
COLLECTED DATA	CLUSTERS	THEMES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reminder of that day does not leave me</li> <li>Inability to release the picture in my mind</li> <li>Pain lingered longer than usual</li> <li>Children taunted and isolated me because my skin is dark</li> <li>Pain was intense during and following the injury (physical pain)</li> <li>I still experience pain dealing with all the things that go with being a single parent</li> <li>It's taken a while to get through the <u>grieving</u> process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>DWELLING ON PAIN</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>RESPONSES TO PAIN</b></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pain experiences come and go quickly</li> <li>Some pains lingered a little longer because of high hopes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>LETTING GO</b></li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pain is because I did not pray much not so much of the pain itself</li> <li>I feel that I failed her because I did not pray fervently and fast for her health and healing</li> <li>It has been 16 years ago, it still bugs me, not that God can change His mind but I did not do what I believe I had to do (pray and fast)</li> <li>As I think about it a little more, the greatest pain in my life came from the hands of my schoolmates</li> <li>I was truly angry at God for taking her</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>BLAMING (SELF, OTHERS, GOD)</b></li> </ul>	

A number of participants claimed that they still continue to experience the pain and a picture of the trauma still lingers in their minds. Dwelling or focusing on past painful experiences is counterproductive. "Dwell means to live, dwell means to stay, and dwell means to be there."<sup>27</sup> People who look back at their past may experience regrets about missed opportunities or bitterness about how they have been treated. These feelings

<sup>27</sup> Terry Williams, *Walking in Power* (Bloomington, IN: Author House, 2004), 26.



are more likely to cause physical manifestations and generally lead to a nonproductive quality of life. Those who look back in anger are also more sensitive to pain. A very clear Biblical illustration of how God does not want His children to dwell on the past is shown in Isaiah which states: “Remember not the former things, nor consider the things of old.”<sup>28</sup> Things of the past are to be left alone in order to move forward. The baggage from the past will only delay forward movement toward the future. “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: the old has gone, the new is here!”<sup>29</sup> The loving thing about having a personal relationship with God is that once He labels us His own, we take on a new self: not a repaired or reconstructed self.

Another response to pain is to “let go.” Letting go means forsaking, leaving, ceasing, and stopping. A couple of participants claimed that some pains linger more than others and that pain comes and goes quickly. These claims can easily be understood: sometimes a song, a particular scent, the rain, or even the weather can easily bring back memories even without meaning to recall them. Letting go of the past can include coping with death, divorce, or a break-up. Two of the most inspiring verses which may encourage a person holding on to pain from the past can be found in the books of Philippians:

Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> NIV, Isaiah 43:18.

<sup>29</sup> NIV, 2 Corinthians 5:17.

<sup>30</sup> NIV, Philippians 3:12-14.

One way to let go is to stay focused on Christ who is the only source of consolation. Our moving forward is focused not on running away from the problem, but running towards the greatest goal which is the upward call of God through Jesus Christ. Another verse which lends support of this cluster can be found in Ephesians which states: “Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.”<sup>31</sup> A person who nurtures his painful past becomes a victim, because he wallows in his pains.

Another response to painful experiences is blaming. Blaming means to find fault; making someone or something outside of oneself responsible for negative outcomes. The object of blame can be the self, others, circumstances, and not rarely God. We often hear people blaming God for their misfortunes or illnesses. No matter what the object of blame is, blaming is like a brake that halts one’s progress toward a new beginning or a new goal. No matter how much a person wants to change, if he blames his real or imagined past for the present, he is not going anywhere; he will be permanently stuck in his rut. Sitting in the same place may be “comfortable” because a person does not have to take a risk, but this is not the life that God wants us to have. God does not want us to sulk in our tent and be content living in the past. Bad things happen in this world; sometimes they are of people’s own choosing – because they have made a poor decision. Other times, however, bad things happen because there is evil in the world.

Christians are not promised an easy ride in this world we shall have tribulations. Bad things can happen to good people. However, regret, blame, and excuses are not options for God’s children, God never want us to be in a dead end. Based on the data

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<sup>31</sup> NIV, Ephesians 4:31-32.

collected, the most common object of blame is the self. The self is not to be blamed; in fact, the Bible even supports the fact that “in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.”<sup>32</sup>

Another theme which evolved from the data collected was the *Impact of Pain*, there are two clusters as follows: Positive Impact and Negative Impact. Table 4 shows the qualitative on Impact of Pain:

<b>TABLE 4</b> <b>PRE-TEST RESULTS</b> <b>PAIN EXPERIENCES' QUALITATIVE DATA</b> <b>Impact of Pain</b>		
<b>DATA COLLECTED</b>	<b>CLUSTERS</b>	<b>THEMES</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When I received the news, I shocked them because I started hugging them and telling them how much I cared for each one of them</li> <li>• I told them that I forgave them</li> <li>• Transform opportunity</li> <li>• We kept our contact, later on they asked for my forgiveness</li> <li>• Memory of that day brings some joy than sadness</li> <li>• The joy is because of my growth in Christ</li> <li>• I believe the pain has built my character and made me a better person as an adult, but it brought me a lot of pain as a child</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>POSITIVE IMPACT ON LIFE</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>IMPACT OF PAIN</b></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to be a painful moment</li> <li>• In spite of family support the anger still creeps in</li> <li>• Still fighting through the “feelings of wanting to be loved”</li> <li>• Because of my past pain I don’t allow people to be very close to me</li> <li>• I still do not trust people with my feelings</li> <li>• Pain experience is pretty far-reaching, pain goes back pretty far in my life</li> <li>• This issue had been cropping up lately as it related to my self-esteem</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>NEGATIVE IMPACT ON LIFE</b></li> </ul>	

This data shows that the pain experience can be an opportunity for forgiveness, manifesting love, experiencing joy instead of sadness, and the building of character. It is

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<sup>32</sup> NIV, Romans 8:37.

a fact that God did not cause man to suffer, but He can definitely make good use of our pains. God can make us much better people because of our pains. We should never think that suffering is a waste. It may sometimes seem to be so, but it is certainly not a waste. “God does not waste pain and suffering. Instead, He uses it to mold us into the image of His Son and to teach us lessons we would probably learn no other way.”<sup>33</sup>

Based on the data, the negative impact of pain included nurturing of anger, fear of trusting people with one’s feelings, fighting through the experience, and affecting one’s self-esteem. The Bible has the best prescription of how one should process brokenness, by giving it to God. The problem with man is that he chooses to use his own ways to try to process and manage pain. People build walls, as many as possible so they can feel safe, so they can feel secure, to protect against the outside world and the danger that it represents for them. The problem with building walls when done too long is that man may eventually be cut off from the environment, from himself, and worse, cut off from God. For some people, it seems quite hard to understand that it’s not so much about what happens to them that cause them so much pain, but rather how they choose to process the life event.

The theme Management of Pain had three clusters: seeking God in the experience, using personal techniques, and holding on to the experience of brokenness. Table 5 shows the data on Management of Pain:

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<sup>33</sup> Carolyn Sutton, *Write It On Your Heart: How To Make Journaling Work For You* (Hagerstown, MD: Herald Publishing Association, 2004), 66.

**TABLE 5**  
**PRE-TEST RESULTS**  
**PAIN EXPERIENCES' QUALITATIVE DATA**  
**Management of Pain (N=13)**

COLLECTED DATA	CLUSTERS	IDENTIFIED THEMES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When I got out of the relationship I saw that God was with me</li> <li>• God showed me how He would work out the way of escape</li> <li>• God reminded me in this process (death of grandmother) that I was blessed to have her for 44 years</li> <li>• God also reminded me that I had a warm body to spend time with instead of a cold body</li> <li>• In the midst of fighting inevitable (loss of a job I had for 13 years), God was preparing me</li> <li>• She will not succeed in her wicked effort, the devil is using her to deter me from my joy, and in serving the Lord</li> <li>• have to persevere in prayer and press on to Christian maturity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>SEEING GOD IN THE PAINFUL EXPERIENCE</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>MANAGEMENT OF PAIN</b></li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I know now what can take away the pain</li> <li>• Seeking acceptance and validation through relationship</li> <li>• Finding out that some of these relationships were not healthy</li> <li>• Pain was so intense that I would have been satisfied with suicide</li> <li>• I just wanted to stop the pain (physical)</li> <li>• In spite of the pain, my initial reaction is to lie and to say I am alright</li> <li>• I learned that in order to get better I have to first honor openly my hurt</li> <li>• After I honored my pain I understood that I needed to go and see a doctor to tell me what is wrong and how it could be fixed</li> <li>• I had to commit to a painful rehab that could restore me back to wholeness</li> <li>• I knew that I had to find some way out of the relationship before he could kill me or I could kill him</li> <li>• I love my grandmother and I could not believe she is now gone</li> <li>• I constantly try to work on myself, but it seems to be of no avail to others</li> <li>• The combination of my religious experience and my faith being renewed again in the Lord is a wonderful thing</li> <li>• I only tried to be kind to her at all times</li> <li>• Losing my wife has brought hurt and questions</li> <li>• Brought some measure of understanding</li> <li>• I thought it was a joke, I began to drop on my knees in anguish</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>USING PERSONAL TECHNIQUES</b></li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feeling helpless as your child suffers as result of my own issues (I have a child in person and his behavior has been a long term problem, lots of stress and weariness)</li> <li>• I don't know how to handle compliments because I am not sure if things are sincere and how the</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>HOLDING ON TO THE EXPERIENCE OF BROKENNESS</b></li> </ul>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It makes me feel disconnected</li> <li>• compliments stacks up to someone else's achievements</li> <li>• Hard to find a balance</li> <li>• Still recently I am tormented by pain depression, at times I am antisocial</li> <li>• Most former Jehovah's witnesses become atheist, suicidal, or sexually promiscuous ( at times, I have experienced the latter)</li> <li>• Having my best friend drift away brought bewilderment</li> <li>• I had what I call a mini-nervous breakdown (my marriage failure-I did not go to counseling or go to the doctor)</li> <li>• Losing parents and maternal grandmother was painful</li> <li>• It caused a lot of pain that time (a relationship I thought was love, even if I knew it was not best for me)</li> <li>• I found myself fighting back each time he would do something</li> <li>• As I think about it a little more, the greatest pain in my life came from the hands of my schoolmates</li> <li>• It is no longer the wound, the scar is a reminder of that painful period</li> <li>• My father was my heart, I deeply missed him, I was lost for a time</li> <li>• I do not know if I was considered clinically depressed or not</li> <li>• I was feeling inadequate, lonely and long periods of low self esteem throughout my life</li> <li>• I am sure that everyone has those feelings from time to time</li> <li>• I got laid off three times, each time I was in a different place spiritually</li> <li>• I feel I am not a good enough mother</li> <li>• I found myself in an abusive relationship (physical and emotional)</li> <li>• The death left a hole of pain</li> <li>• My wife was totally devastated from the event (the death of my son)</li> <li>• Identifying my dead son was one of the hardest tasks of my life</li> <li>• In a word "unpursued"</li> <li>• Rejection from family and others I meet</li> <li>• Being misunderstood and not being affirmed as a child</li> <li>• Feeling helpless as your child suffers as result of my own issues (I have a child in person and his behavior has been a long term problem, lots of stress and weariness)</li> <li>• I don't know how to handle compliments because I am not sure if things are sincere and how the</li> <li>• It makes me feel disconnected</li> <li>• compliments stacks up to someone else's achievements</li> <li>• Hard to find a balance</li> <li>• Still recently I am tormented by pain depression, at times I am antisocial</li> </ul>		
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Books, journals, experts, and even the internet offer numerous tips in managing pain, be it physical, psychosocial, or spiritual pain. In fact friends and relatives try to hang around and try to comfort or console someone who is struggling with a painful experience. Based on the results of the study, participants employed a variety of techniques to manage their circumstances such as accepting and understanding the situation, being open to the hurt, seeking professional help, going through rehabilitation, being kind, using religious experiences, and/or trying to find a way out of such circumstance. By the standards of the world, there can never be one universal way effective and efficient to let the pain go away.

A number of participants were able to see God in what they were going through. Apparently, the participants' claims pointed to the fact that God was telling them something through their painful experiences. An internet source says this about painful experiences. Sometimes people become disillusioned by tragedy and pain. They attempt to explain it away by saying that everything has a purpose. God manifests himself in solutions to problems or sufferings, people's responsibility however is to make the proper response. In the book *Man's Search for Meaning*, the author-psychiatrist Viktor Frankl refers to the concentration camps stating "it is just such an exceptionally difficult external situation which gives man the opportunity to grow spiritually beyond himself...an accomplishment which in ordinary circumstances they would have never achieved."<sup>34</sup> Based on human potentiality, Frankl believed that everything can have a purpose.

It is not uncommon for man to put matters into his own hands when confronted with difficult situations. It is also quite a temptation to pray to God and say: "I leave this concern into your hands;" but go back, take it away from God and try to make things

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<sup>34</sup> Viktor E. Frankl, *Man's Search For Meaning* (New York, NY: Pocket Books, 1984), 93.

work out. This activity is consistent with the findings in the pre-testing. Examples of responses which appeared in the table are seeking acceptance and validation through relationships, to lie to oneself and say “I am alright,” to constantly try and work it out by myself, try to be kind, and even considering suicide. The bible however has very clear prescriptions on how to handle life’s concerns and issues. “Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God.”<sup>35</sup> As Jesus and the apostle Paul said, no one who keeps looking back and dwelling on their past is fit for the kingdom of God. Paul says that we have to forget those things which are now behind us and move on and press forward into those things which now lie ahead of us. God will give each person a reasonable amount of time to clean up some of the loose ends from their past.

Another verse in the bible which states that man should not put matters into his own hands can be found in Proverbs: “Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding.”<sup>36</sup> This means that if a person trusts in God with all his heart, he does not turn around and try to figure out for himself what is right or wrong. If one does not understand a certain Biblical command or principle or even disagrees with it, then he should resolve to obey God and either do research on God’s Word for better understanding. This is a manifestation that God is viewed as one’s ruler and not oneself. Only God has the right to decide what is good or bad (Proverbs 28:26; Jeremiah 10:23). Taking notice of God in all our ways means that we do not view anything without God’s involvement.

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<sup>35</sup> NIV, Philippians 4:6.

<sup>36</sup> NIV, Proverbs 3:5.



There is really no point in holding on to past painful experiences, as mentioned in the pre-test results. Isaiah 53:4 states: "Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted." God desires to heal man's wounds and take the pain and hurt away. God desires to heal broken hearts and bind up wounds. Furthermore, Peter 5:7 states: "Casting all your care upon him; for He cares for you." In order to encourage healing from brokenness, it is vital that man take advantage of what Christ has done, and learn to cast all cares upon the Lord. It is thus mandatory to release those hurt, painful and fearful emotions into the hands of Jesus.

Hanging onto fear, hurt and pain can actually block the healing power of the Holy Spirit in one's soul. It is vital to open up and allow the Lord to heal the wounds.

According to the Gospel of Matthew: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."<sup>37</sup> In the said verse, it's not speaking about a heavy physical burden, but a burden in a person's soul. This is made evident in the later part of this passage where it says, "Ye shall find rest unto your souls." Jesus is telling us to come unto Him and give Him our heavy burden, and take His yoke which is light and easy to bear.

After the first training session, the participants were given homework to accomplish Journal #2 which was collected on May 19th, the second day of the Transformative Ministry Model sessions. The qualitative data on Journal #2 will be presented in the succeeding section of this chapter. On the second and final day of training, the participants were asked to take the two post-tests, the Painful Life

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<sup>37</sup> NIV, Matthew 11:28-30.

Experience Rating Scale (quantitative section) and the Pain Experience Journal #3 (qualitative section).

Table 6 shows the data on the post-test rating scale:

<b>TABLE 6</b> <b>POST-TEST RESULTS</b> <b>PAIN EXPERIENCE (BROKENESS TO WHOLENESS)</b> <b>WEIGHTED MEAN AVERAGE-WMA (n=13 )</b>		
<b>PAIN AS OPPORTUNITY FOR NEW BEGINNINGS</b>	<b>WMA INTERPRETATION</b>	<b>SUBTOTAL WMA INTERPRETATION</b>
1. Life's suffering makes an individual a better person.	4.46	4.44 (agree)
2. When life is at its worst, I know that the best is about to begin.	4.38	
3. Failures open doors to success	4.53	
4. What's coming is always better than what was	4.46	
5. There is always something good that the painful past brings	4.38	
<b>ADVERSITY AS A BLESSING</b>	<b>WMA INTERPRETATION</b>	<b>SUBTOTAL WMA INTERPRETATION</b>
6. God allows His children to be tempted by Satan through painful experiences	4.46 (agree)	4.21 (agree)
7. A painful experience is a blessing in disguise	4.23 (agree)	
8. God is definitely in painful experiences***	3.92 (not sure)	
9. God allows painful experiences to bless us	4.53 (agree)	
10. A painful experience is not a hindrance to life and joy***	3.92 (not sure)	
<b>SETTING PERSONAL GOALS</b>	<b>WMA INTERPRETATION</b>	<b>SUBTOTAL WMA INTERPRETATION</b>
11. All solutions to problems can be found in the bible	4.76 (agree)	3.70 (not sure)
12. My being in pain is not an excuse for me to miss worship services.***	2.84 (disagree)	
13. It is not fine to isolate myself from Christian friends when I am in pain***.	3.92 (not sure)	
14. Frequently talking about our pains is helpful	3.61 (not sure)	
15. The first to know about my pains is my spouse (or my best friend as may be applicable)	3.38 (not sure)	
<b>EMBRACING WHOLENESS</b>	<b>WMA INTERPRETATION</b>	<b>SUBTOTAL WMA INTERPRETATION</b>
16. It is possible to be completely healed from painful experiences	4.00 (agree)	3.30 (not sure)
17. Past painful experiences can completely be healed, thus cannot continue to haunt us***	2.15 (disagree)	
18. I don't feel that I that I am a victim of a painful past***	2.38 (disagree)	
19. I can freely talk about my painful past without feeling any hurt at all	3.69 (not sure)	
20. Because of my painful experiences, I consider myself victorious	4.31 (agree)	

\*\*\* items that had been re-stated and reverse-scored

All five of the post-testing statements under this subheading scored above four, with a weighted mean average of 4.44 which is .26 points higher than the pre-test mean score. The item on “what’s coming is better than what was,” had a significant increase in score. Life’s suffering makes an individual a better person. Using the Exodus story as a launching pad, the context group was able to theologically support the importance of giving a voice to pain. As Israel found their voice in their painful condition of slavery God in turn heard and responded to their cries. Likewise, with the New Testament example of blind Bartimaeus, Jesus responded to his cry. Therefore, we can conclude that by giving voice to our painful situation, we are able to invoke the attention, interest, and presence of God to aid and assist in our painful experience.

When life is at its worst, the best is about to begin. Part of this program focus was helping individuals to view their life situation, challenges, hurts, and pain from a Biblical perspective whereby they are able to see God moving in the midst of their pain.

Failures open doors to success. This area has a noted positive change because several individuals were still processing failures in their lives, such as: loss unemployment, divorce, and even the death of a love one as their failure to pray and fast. As we began dealing with the pain process, however, individuals were beginning to let go of years of internal anguish and pain.

What’s coming is always better than what was. This statement, presented to the context group points to the mental imaging area of study. Mental Imaging was one of the major teaching methodology aspects of the program. This process encouraged individuals to visualize the kind of futures they wanted to live, and begin taking action and speaking supportive words to produce that kind of future.

The quantitative data suggests that there was no change in the participant response to the statement: “there is always something good that the painful past brings.” This is to be expected as it takes more time for individuals to process new Biblical Truth and apply to their lives. The qualitative analysis of the impact of this program provides a broader understanding to the interpretation of participants thought processes and how they appropriate the Word of God into their individual lives. As some individuals process hurt and pain that spans several years and decades, the qualitative data shows measurable change in how they are beginning to process their pain.

“God allows His children to be tempted by Satan through painful experiences.” Individuals were taught to see God’s presence in every area of their lives to include their pain story. Through this ministry model, individuals are able to see how God, like Job, would allow them to experience painful situations.

“A painful experience is a blessing in disguise.” A significant factor of the program was for individuals to come to the realization that they view their situation with the utmost priority. Once they began to understand that their personal self-talk about their situation can hinder or help what they are experiencing, they began speaking more positive about their circumstances.

“God is definitely in painful experiences.” By studying biblical examples of how God delivered individuals in history, one may clearly see how God is in the midst of our tribulations. Also, as participants shared their own painful experiences, others were able to relate to their respective stories and make the connection of God’s presence in their lives as well. “God allows painful experiences to bless us.” During moments of

reflection, participants were able to see how some of their greatest blessing was also tied to their greatest challenge and painful experiences.

“A painful experience is not a hindrance to life and joy.” By teaching Biblical Truth in a scenario, the participants were able to identify their pain and connect them to the idea that God responds to other painful situations to provide hope that He can do the same with them. “All solutions to problems can be found in the Bible.” A positive change is noted in this area primarily because the researcher expounded upon biblical examples to illustrate the teaching point of embracing wholeness. By doing so, individuals were able to see God’s presence in their respective stories.

“My being in pain is not an excuse for me to miss worship services.” Improvement in this area can be attributed to several factors. Members of the context group derive from a congregation that maximizes on the use of technology in broadcasting the worship service to a listening audience. By doing so, the community of believers and worshipers extend themselves to those who tune in by viewing service on their computers, androids, IPAD’s, IPOD’s, cell phones, etc... This enables a person to connect to the worship experience, even though they are not physically present at the local gathering assembly. By emphasizing the importance of staying connected through various avenues, individuals have gained insight with an enhanced perspective of God, as the entire local church body is also edified.

“It is not fine to isolate myself from Christian friends when I am in pain.” One of the teachable points was the importance of healing in the midst of a community of believers. “Frequently talking about our pains is helpful.” By reading through individuals qualitative data, the researcher was able to interpret what appears as negative responses to

the program. Some participant's pain was described as long term, hopeless, cultic, and very demeaning, therefore needing more time to process the ministry model information and begin trusting the process to improve their condition. This response is not negative to the program, as it is an honest discussion of learning to Trust God in every area of their lives that was once kept hidden and guarded.

"Past painful experiences can completely be healed," thus cannot continue to haunt us. Change can and will occur but it also depends on how fertile an individual's faith is in a particular area. By using the Woman with an Issue of Blood as a theological example, the participants are able to understand the importance of internal communication. Furthermore, through this example the researcher taught the importance of expressing expectations rather than continuously sharing the pain being experienced. This ministry model serves as an empowering tool, challenging individuals to change their normal behaviors in the way they see things.

"I don't feel that I am a victim of a painful past." Some individuals may still be waiting on their condition of existence to physically change before they can fully embrace wholeness. "I can freely talk about my painful past without feeling any hurt at all." The thought of conversing about a painful past without feeling the hurt associated with the pain is still new to some individuals. "Because of my painful experiences, I consider myself victorious." Through strong in-depth teaching, the researcher discovered individual mindsets began positively changing as relating to their painful experiences.

Participants' describe their Pain Experience after having attended the *Transformative Ministry Program* ministry model. The following are the gathered results:

## After First Training Session: Journal # 2 (Qualitative Data)

**TABLE 7**  
**POST-TEST RESULTS (After One Training Session)**  
**PAIN EXPERIENCES' QUALITATIVE DATA**  
**Theme # 1 (Pain Has A Purpose)**  
**(N=13)**

COLLECTED DATA	CLUSTERS	THEMES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• God is growing me</li> <li>• God was preparing me</li> <li>• I learned to listen and obey God's word</li> <li>• I learned about myself and why I suppressed my feelings</li> <li>• I became a man with a whole new vision and goal for my life</li> <li>• I had to go through pain, in order for me to have a breakthrough</li> <li>• It is taking me to the next level /step towards my spiritual maturity and growing in my faith with Him.</li> <li>• When thrown into the fiery pit of a painful experience I come out better, stronger with a new lease on life</li> <li>• It helps me to handle it better next time I encounter it spiritually, emotionally, and mentally</li> <li>• I became wiser, there is a lesson in the valley</li> <li>• The pain I suffered was allowed by him to mold me into a stronger person</li> <li>• The pain was an opportunity for me to learn what God has in store</li> <li>• This place is preparing for eternal life in heaven where pain is no more</li> <li>• I keep on working for the kingdom and just wait on God</li> </ul>	Self-Related	Pain Has A Purpose
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I now tell everybody about His love, goodness, and peace</li> <li>• He directed me to begin doing for others in the church what the church has done for me during my heartbreak, begin serving, lifting up the spirits of others.</li> <li>• Through the abusive relationship, God meant for me to minister to others</li> <li>• God uses painful experiences to help other people going through the same thing</li> <li>• I feel obligated to give back not for some designated amount of time, but for the rest of my life</li> <li>• There is value in the painful experience because it strengthen me to be a testimony and help those who may go through a similar experience for I can't teach and talk of that which I know not of</li> <li>• Through the experience, I can be a vessel, a conduit for Him</li> <li>• My pain helped me to be a walking testimony for Him that we can overcome, we must simply believe.</li> </ul>	Others-Related	

The collected post-test data illustrates how individuals viewed their personal pain experience after attending the first training session. The research shows that after attending the first training session participants developed a perspective that pain was serving a purpose in their lives. The research reveals how participants are now able to see a greater purpose in their lives for their painful experiences. Some equate it to them becoming stronger, more Kingdom focused, and mindful of how God is using their experiences for the good of others.

**TABLE 8**  
**POST-TEST RESULTS (After One Training Session)**  
**PAIN EXPERIENCES' QUALITATIVE DATA**  
**Theme # 2 (Pain is A Process)**  
**(N=13)**

COLLECTED DATA	CLUSTERS	THEMES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I did not want to trust God, I did not want to listen</li> <li>• My sense of things is that one never gets over such a tragic and devastating event</li> <li>• I am better now, not necessarily well. I am not sure that I want well if well means that I forget the pain and along with it, my son</li> <li>• Strive for and seek the positive in it, though it is difficult</li> <li>• The rape created insecurity and intimidation</li> <li>• I have allowed myself to be emotionally bullied</li> <li>• Do not be deceived</li> <li>• At first I am going to say that I am resolved or I have accepted my plight because I know that I am not exempt from the pains of life.</li> <li>• I was losing hope, dared not pray for something better because some of my problems are so long-termed that no change, no point in getting my hope up only to be disappointed</li> <li>• It's a faith struggle</li> <li>• I felt as if the only answer I am getting is "no" or wait that there was no use praying</li> <li>• You get used to the pain you've been with for so long, with the prospects looking bleak...what's the point</li> <li>• It was so difficult for me to imagine the opposite of my current life</li> <li>• Then I realized that the basis of my lack of faith is fear</li> <li>• It's a path of least resistance</li> <li>• There are some things I can do to make my life better, plan and implement it</li> <li>• I visualize an optimum solution, positive energy, thought of things I could do, realized what my hindrances were, decided to do something about</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leaning on one's resources</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Pain is a Process</b></p>



the areas I can change		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• God had to prove to me that He was what He said He was</li> <li>• God spoke to me, "I will take care of you."</li> <li>• God was telling me to trust Him</li> <li>• God is assuring me that He would wipe away all my fears, tears, sadness, and pain</li> <li>• God told me to take His hand, move forward, and follow Him</li> <li>• I have learned that God talks to me as I went through the process</li> <li>• My church rescued me, provided help and direction, and showed me what I ought to be doing for those in need.</li> <li>• The church was overwhelmingly good to me</li> <li>• To trust Him and not to lean on my own understanding</li> <li>• He is forever faithful and true to me and He will bring me out of it.</li> <li>• He will not put any more on me than He knows I can bear</li> <li>• The Lord is Father of the fatherless</li> <li>• I am not damaged goods, I am still worthy, I am still a daughter of the King</li> <li>• God allowed me to be walking back through my pain toward victory and salvation</li> <li>• The Lord has brought to my life women that fear the Lord and walk on His ways</li> <li>• God knows what we need, when we need it, and where to get it</li> <li>• I am not walking with pain alone, but with my Savior</li> <li>• I am not anxious because I know He hears my prayers, sees my tears, hears my cries, understands my broken heart</li> <li>• I must remember Christ suffered, Job suffered, all will suffer in association with Christ, to test whether we are in the faith</li> <li>• At least I know that God has kept, and is keeping me through all my pain</li> <li>• Someone is praying for me because there have been too many times I would have given up but I made it through</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Awareness of God's Presence</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• He gave me comforting words as the healing process started</li> <li>• God led me to seek out a therapist to help me deal with the grief</li> <li>• I need to trust Him</li> <li>• I thank God for being patient with me</li> <li>• God told me to go back to work...to do, He'd explain all of it later</li> <li>• The Lord told me to come to Him</li> <li>• The Lord is a healer, He is walking me back through so I can see the pain, understand its roots, and break the yoke that is on me.</li> <li>• The Lord provides strength</li> <li>• He has taught me to lean and depend totally and completely on Him</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hearing God's Instructions</li> </ul>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• He is also telling me that more pain will come inevitably, along with life experiences</li> <li>• But as long as I am able to yield to Him and stay close to Him, it will be short-lived and less intense</li> <li>• Get intimate with him to determine His will- much like Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane</li> <li>• Turn to God during this purification process</li> <li>• The Lord is telling me that my life in the land temporary, short as if alien of the land</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The pain is now called joy</li> <li>• I am sold out for Christ, who when I cried out lifted me up and carried me through the trauma. I'll never forget</li> <li>• Trials and tribulations will not destroy me, it is a process of life</li> <li>• The Lord is telling me that I am healed from my past pain</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experiencing God's Healing</li> </ul>	

The collected data revealed the depth of the hurt and pain participants experienced and in some cases were still experiencing. The research reveals that individuals realized their inability to lean on their own resources for empowerment, but had to rely on God. The collected data also reveals the participants search for answers, and their quest for making sense of the loss, hurt, pain and of the wounds. In addition, the research shows the participant's dealings with pain created an overwhelming sense of awareness and presence of God. The research shows that during the process individuals were about to hear God's instruction for their situation and life. As a result of hearing and receiving God's instruction they are now able to begin to experience His Healing.

The following charts capture data gathered from the researcher's context group after they attended the Transformative Ministry Program model: Journal number Three (Qualitative Data):

TABLE 9  
POST-TEST RESULTS (After the Second Training Session)  
PAIN EXPERIENCES' QUALITATIVE DATA (N=13)  
Theme # 1 Going Through the Healing Process

COLLECTED DATA	CLUSTERS	THEMES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Repeating what you are moving away from</li> <li>• Re-living painful experiences all over again</li> <li>• I am still afraid of the results.</li> <li>• There is a big part of me that just wishes someone (the right one) would hold me and tell me everything will be all right, and then I feel I could go on. I don't have that. It's a feeling of aloneness. I think I am waiting for someone to rescue me</li> <li>• I didn't get enough nurturing as a child because my older brother had childhood diabetes. This lack of nurturing seems to come up in a lot of my situations</li> <li>• I feel empty most of times. I need connection. There has to be some order, some rest, some peace</li> </ul>	<p>Dealing with the remnants of the Past Experience</p>	<p>Going Through the Healing Process</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not seeing the person again and leaving the area made it easy for me to move through the other side</li> <li>• Moving on is not easy</li> <li>• God allows us to be put in a situation but he would walk with us</li> <li>• Embrace what has happened to me</li> <li>• Embracing what has happened is not done with quickness (the abusive relationship has been 24 years since it happened)</li> <li>• I could not see God orchestrating the plan of escape when I was in the situation</li> <li>• I did not embrace her death and I did not acknowledge how I feel</li> <li>• I was so worried about my mother that I forgot to care for myself in the process I was allowing grief to control my life</li> <li>• I was making excuses for not hanging out with friends and sleeping excessively</li> <li>• Moving on cannot be done by yourself</li> <li>• I have always been afraid of making those decisions because it meant that I would say no to some things or people</li> <li>• Sitting down forces me to look at myself and actually commit to myself that I will execute the plan.</li> <li>• I guess if I would sit down and shut out the world, write in a journal some goals, I would be much more successful and feel better about myself.</li> <li>• I know part of the problem and begin to work on it.</li> <li>• Forgiving myself and what has happened</li> <li>• Realizing without God and the Holy Spirit one can truly move on.</li> <li>• It is not alright with my soul to willfully practice sin.</li> </ul>	<p>Coming into realizations</p>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Freedom from me</li> <li>• I don't want to ever re-live it</li> <li>• Forgiving self for being in a state of non-deserving for so long</li> <li>• Being alive and well again</li> <li>• Letting go of the past</li> <li>• I was able to move out with much prayer and therapy</li> <li>• I can talk about it without a sense of sadness</li> <li>• Take time to pick up, process, and move on</li> <li>• Accept the good and the bad of it</li> <li>• I visualize how I want my future to look, no matter how unfathomable it may seem right now.</li> <li>• No matter if someone else would agree with my design (because I have refrained from visualizing, wondering if I or my vision will be acceptable)</li> <li>• I actualized myself and started expressing myself appropriately (which I don't do always)</li> <li>• I might actually begin to like myself and others might too.</li> <li>• If other information is available for me to consider and change my point of view, then that's good. But with the information I currently have, I have to go along with my decision/opinion and not be afraid of or ashamed of it.</li> </ul>	Working with Oneself	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowing what it means to trust God</li> <li>• Giving thanks to God</li> <li>• God will take care of you and me</li> <li>• Father God is the answer</li> <li>• I have to ask for strength to forgive, and in faith forgive the person</li> <li>• Continue to pray and trust God with the outcome</li> <li>• I have to ask for His will to be done with help to bear it</li> <li>• I ask God and have to trust that he will provide the right person with the right touch to give me that hug that I need.</li> <li>• It is only the Holy Spirit that can change hearts and come to Christ, allow no place for the devil and he will flee from me.</li> <li>• The "Great Commission" is a responsibility of all Christians. If I continue to let my light shine the devil resist the light and will flee from me.</li> <li>• I will be victorious if I don't tire out. Prayer, working in harmony with my prayer will enable me to heal and when you see some good fruitage result from doing what is right although not common or popular doing things for God's glory and not that of my own.</li> <li>• Moving on with my life is God's way of showing that he is here for me and he will help with the taking care of this depressed person without it being transferred to me.</li> <li>• I still feel the pain but I know how to move on letting God be God in my life.</li> </ul>	Working with God	

The research revealed that many participants were still dealing with the remnants of the past painful experiences long after the experience had occurred without any real

resolution of overcoming it. Through the process of attending the sessions, the participants began to come to the realization that it is possible to move beyond the hurtful experiences.

TABLE 10 POST-TEST RESULTS (After the Second Training Session) PAIN EXPERIENCES' QUALITATIVE DATA (N=13) Theme # 2 Triumph Over Pain		
COLLECTED DATA	CLUSTERS	THEMES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I may use those experiences to share with others, but that part of my past doesn't bother me and no one can use it against me</li> <li>It has allowed me to minister to others</li> <li>Putting painful experiences behind, not reflecting in bitterness, not stuffing painful experiences within but going forward and moving in wholeness</li> <li>Seeking what the lesson is in that painful experience and then using the painful experience and then using the suffering from the pain as a stepping stone to share your testimony to walk someone else through the pain.</li> <li>Now I have joined a Senior Group and have worked at the Palls have become involved in other civic groups in my community and have to be careful not to be overwhelmed.</li> <li>Use the painful experience to live out God's call on my life</li> </ul>	Utilizing the painful experience	Triumph over pain
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Moving on should be a triumph not a tribulation</li> <li>Forgiveness is good for me, it's lowered my blood pressure, less aches and pains, sleep well, and I am strengthened spiritually.</li> <li>Quoted a verse (Psalm 27:1): The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?</li> <li>For once in my life with God, I felt empowered by His grace, I set up a plan for moving forward</li> <li>I have never reverted back to the bondage of fear that keeps me from standing on my own two feet and my faith in God is stronger and I have freedom from this painful experience because of God in my life.</li> <li>With God in my life the pain becomes a growing pain and I am no longer a victim of my circumstances.</li> </ul>	Moving on with God's empowerment	

## Difference in the Pre-Test and Post-Test Scores

<b>DIFFERENCE IN PRE-TEST AND POST-TEST SCORES</b> <b>(n=13)</b>			
Statements	Pre-Test Mean Scores	Post-Test Mean Scores	Difference
1. Life's suffering makes an individual a better person.	4.38 (agree)	4.46 (agree)	+0.08
2. When life is at its worst, I know that the best is about to begin.	4.15 (agree)	4.38 (agree)	+0.23
3. Failures open doors to success	4.23 (agree)	4.53 (agree)	+0.3
4. What's coming is always better than what was	3.76 (not sure)	4.46 (agree)	+0.7
5. There is always something good that the painful past brings	4.38 (agree)	4.38 (agree)	No difference
<b>PAIN AS OPPORTUNITY FOR NEW BEGINNINGS</b>	<b>4.18 (agree)</b>	<b>4.44 (agree)</b>	<b>+0.26</b>
6. God allows His children to be tempted by Satan through painful experiences	3.84 (not sure)	4.46 (agree)	+0.62
7. A painful experience is a blessing in disguise	2.61 (disagree)	4.23 (agree)	+1.62
8. God is definitely in painful experiences***	3.61 (not sure)	3.92 (not sure)	+0.31
9. God allows painful experiences to bless us	4.07 (agree)	4.53 (agree)	+0.46
10. A painful experience is not a hindrance to life and joy)***	2.38 (disagree)	3.92 (not sure)	+1.54
<b>ADVERSITY AS A BLESSING</b>	<b>3.54 (not sure)</b>	<b>4.21 (agree)</b>	<b>+0.67</b>
11. All solutions to problems can be found in the bible	4.38 (agree)	4.76 (agree)	+0.38
12. My being in pain cannot be an excuse for me to miss worship services ***	2.38 (disagree)	2.84 (disagree)	+0.46
13. It is not fine to isolate myself from Christian friends when I am in pain.***	4.15 (agree)	3.92 (not sure)	-0.69
14. Frequently talking about our pains is helpful	4.23 (agree)	3.61 (not sure)	-0.62
15. The first to know about my pains is my spouse (or my best friend as may be applicable)	3.92 (not sure)	3.38 (not sure)	-0.54
<b>SETTING PERSONAL GOALS</b>	<b>3.81 (not sure)</b>	<b>3.70 (not sure)</b>	<b>-0.11</b>
16. It is possible to be completely healed from painful experiences	4.00 (agree)	4.00 (agree)	No difference
17. Past painful experiences can completely be healed, thus cannot continue to haunt us***	2.07 (disagree)	2.15 (disagree)	+0.08
18. I don't feel that I am a victim of a painful past***	3.15 (not sure)	2.38 (disagree)	-0.77
19. I can freely talk about my painful past without feeling any hurt at all	3.23 (not sure)	3.69 (not sure)	+0.46
20. Because of my painful experiences, I consider myself victorious	4.00 (agree)	4.31 (agree)	+0.31
<b>EMBRACING WHOLENESS</b>	<b>3.29 (not sure)</b>	<b>3.30 (not sure)</b>	<b>+0.01</b>

\*\*\* Items that had been re-stated and reverse-scored

+ Scores are higher in the post test; - scores are lower in the post test

The following describes the difference in the participant's description of their pain experiences. In the first journal which is the recording of the painful experience prior to

attendance to the Transformative Ministry Model, there were three themes that evolved: Responses to Pain, Impact of Pain, and Management of Pain. In the first theme (Responses to Pain), there were three data clusters: Letting Go, Dwelling on Pain, and Blaming Self, Others, and God. The second theme (Impact of Pain), there were two data clusters: Positive Impact of Pain and Negative Impact of Pain. For the theme (Management of Pain), there were three data clusters: Seeing God in the Painful Experience, Using Personal Techniques, and Holding on to the Experience of Brokenness.

After attendance to the first training session, participants were asked to write their second journal and the results revealed two themes: Pain Has a Purpose and Pain is a Process. The first theme (Pain has a Purpose) had two data clusters: Self Related and Others-Related. The second theme (Pain is a Process) had four data clusters: Leaning on One's Resources, Awareness of God's Presence, Hearing God's Instructions, and Experiencing God's Healing.

There are three glaring differences between journal one and journal two entries as follows:

1. As to focus: journal one focused more on the painful experience while journal two showed attempts to focus away from the pain and to see beyond the painful experience.
2. As to the Role of the Self: journal one showed more evidence of using one's self to understand and process the pain experience, while journal two moved away from the self.
3. As to the Role of God: journal one mentioned very little about God, one of which is to blame and/or question God for the painful experience; journal two showed more evidences of centering the pain process on God's will and intervention.

The third journal was done after all of the training sessions. The journals revealed two major themes: Going through the Healing Process, and Triumph Over Pain. Under

the first theme (going through the healing process), there were three data clusters as follows: dealing with the remnants of the past experience, coming into realizations, working with self and working with God. The second theme, (Triumph over Pain) had two data clusters: Utilizing the painful experience and moving on with God's empowerment.

The difference between journals two and three showed the following:

1. The Focus: journal two showed evidences of going beyond the pain; in journal three the focus is on utilizing the pain experience to bless others.
2. The Role of the Self: journal three emphasized on not only dealing with the self in reference to the painful experience as it is in journal two, but being in harmony with oneself as the participants attempted to go through the healing process.
3. The Role of God: journal two showed evidences on how God's will and intervention worked for the participants; in journal three evidences showed that God's empowerment can lead to triumph over pain.



## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **REFLECTION, SUMMARY, AND CONCLUSION**

With love and great consideration, the writer sought to provide a model to address one of the great challenges in the Church. Providing a prescription for individuals with painful experiences who have sustained deep-seated emotional wounds and transforming those wounds into wholeness. The writer proposed that these wounds would be cured and healed with the help of preaching, teaching, and counseling to the wounded individuals. Furthermore, it has been found that bringing people to the cross is the most effective method of healing them and their wounds.

The cross stands for the sacrifice that Jesus gave in order to save humanity. Hence, the Word of God is the principle for the healing of those who are wounded. This study has revealed that in spite of a person's belief in God, they may suffer from a painful past without experiencing complete wholeness God has in-store for believers. The writer advised the reader that wholeness must first be evident in their minds and spirits before it can be realized in their personal lives.

The implication of the writer's research is that the church should accept responsibility of educating members into wholeness as a part of their God given spiritual inheritance of which should be pursued. The writer's central intent was to expose the reader to the premise that believer's in Christ are able to rise above the brokenness, and embrace a holistic lifestyle of empowerment to fulfill their purpose and destiny.

This ministry project examined the need to identify personal pain while applying biblical principles to transform wounds into wholeness. The theological and biblical basis for this project was grounded in the concept that God still hears and answers the cry of His people which will ultimately result in their deliverance. In this project, the writer addressed four major key areas:

1. Pain, The Birthing Place For a New Beginning;
2. Goal Setting/Mental Imaging;
3. The Blessing of Adversity; and
4. Embracing Wholeness

In spite of the numerous amounts of resource materials relative to overcoming pain and brokenness, the fact that many Christians seem unaware and uninformed is what is most challenging. It was the researcher's goal to inform his context group of the fact that God does not wish for any of His children to live lives void of wholeness.

Inclusive in this project was a survey that consisted of twenty questions: three journal questions, four teaching session, three sermons, and a pre and post test survey. As a result of this study, several participants made a recommendation that this Ministry Model should be made a significant part of all Christian Education Departments throughout, and taught as a part of the Evangelical Teaching Association of the Fall and Spring core classes. Based upon the data presented in this research, it is clear that walking in wholeness can be achieved by giving attention, studying, and confessing God's Word.

This project has helped the researched understand that in the midst of pain, unexpected doors open and unexpected opportunities can come about. To some, it may be

an opportunity to experience the care and support of loving friends and family members who manifest themselves in mighty ways during moments of suffering and pain.

It was during the experimentation portion of this project that the researcher became able to contend that God does not cause sufferings, but He allows them to take affect for a season which many times a believer cannot understand. It is not for the believer to understand God's workings in our lives; but in the midst of the suffering, God gives peace beyond comprehension. "And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."<sup>1</sup>

A person who has a personal relationship with Jesus Christ may be depressed but never discouraged. No matter what the believer goes through there is always that small still voice telling him that God can use anything to bless him including his valley experiences.

Through thoughtful preparation, the researcher was able to divulge the fact that God is an able God. It was during his ministry model application that the researcher described God as capable of transforming both pain and evil into an exceedingly great work. In Joseph's life, the evil that was turned into good became a testimony to the power and the goodness of the living God. The worldly response to sufferings imposed upon us by people is vengeance: "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth,"<sup>2</sup> but the Lord said "I tell you not to resist an evil person. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> NIV, Philippians 4:7.

<sup>2</sup> NIV, Exodus 21:24.

<sup>3</sup> NIV, Matthew 5:39.

One of the most significant breakthroughs of this project was when the researcher's context group united under the statement: "through Christ, we have peace with God, and so in Him we have peace in our own minds." The stated sentence was formulated by the researcher to gauge the ministry model's effectiveness. During the discussion of this accepted notion, the researcher determined to further describe the fact that Christ overcame so that we may not be left to self-destruct.

This project also allowed the researcher the opportunity to reiterate the Gospel message as the researcher shared that at the very instance a person accepts Christ Jesus as his Lord and Savior; they become a new creation. The believer's relationship with God changes forever. The Christian acknowledges God as his "Abba Father." This portion of the project was immensely effective as the researcher challenged his context group to make a personal choice; suggesting that they place their trust in Christ while totally depending upon Him and what He has provided for them.

Based on this investigative experience, the researcher is better situated as a reference for making caring decisions, solving problems, resolving conflicts, and better equipped to deal with day to day matters with an intentional God-conscious, knowing that "all things will work together for good."<sup>4</sup>

The researcher has developed both as a believer in Christ, and as a student. This experience has been most helpful to the researcher's maturation, and has trained his thinking to embrace a greater awareness of God's loving grace.

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<sup>4</sup> NIV, Romans 8:28.

## **APPENDIX A**

### **WEEK ONE: PRE-TESTING EVALUATION SAMPLE**

Dear Respondents:

I am currently conducting a survey on Pain Experiences as a requirement for my post graduate studies. Be assured of anonymity and confidentiality with the treatment of data you provide me. Thank you.

Elijah Campbell

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## PAIN EXPERIENCES SURVEY

### Part I: Participant's Profile

**Instruction: Put a check mark on the blank corresponding to your personal information**

1. Age

- a. \_\_\_\_\_ 20-39
- b. \_\_\_\_\_ 40-59
- c. \_\_\_\_\_ 60-79
- d. \_\_\_\_\_ 80 and above

2. Gender

- a. \_\_\_\_\_ male
- b. \_\_\_\_\_ female

3. Highest Educational Attainment

- a. \_\_\_\_\_ High School
- b. \_\_\_\_\_ Associate Degree
- c. \_\_\_\_\_ College Degree
- d. \_\_\_\_\_ Post Graduate Degree

4. Pain Profile

- a. When did you experience hurts in your life?  
 \_\_\_\_\_ within the last 3 years  
 \_\_\_\_\_ within the last 5 years

\_\_\_\_\_ within the last 10 years

\_\_\_\_\_ more than 10 years ago

b. When did you experience disappointments in your life?

\_\_\_\_\_ within the last 3 years

\_\_\_\_\_ within the last 5 years

\_\_\_\_\_ within the last 10 years

\_\_\_\_\_ more than 10 years ago

c. When did you experience hopelessness in your life?

\_\_\_\_\_ within the last 3 years

\_\_\_\_\_ within the last 5 years

\_\_\_\_\_ within the last 10 years

\_\_\_\_\_ more than 10 years ago

d. What is/was the source of your pain experience? (you may have more than 1 answers)

\_\_\_\_\_ Death of a love one

\_\_\_\_\_ Loss of a job

\_\_\_\_\_ Divorce/ Broken relationship for various reasons

\_\_\_\_\_ Physical Illness

\_\_\_\_\_ Financial Crisis

\_\_\_\_\_ Others, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

e. How often do you think about your painful experience

\_\_\_\_\_almost everyday

\_\_\_\_\_occasionally

\_\_\_\_\_rarely

\_\_\_\_\_never

f. Have you at some point experienced manifestations which you think are caused by your painful experiences?

\_\_\_\_\_yes

\_\_\_\_\_no

\_\_\_\_\_not sure

if your answer is yes, how would you describe this manifestations?

\_\_\_\_\_sleeplessness

\_\_\_\_\_indulgence (such as: overeating, oversleeping, shopping, exercising, etc)

\_\_\_\_\_loss of interest

\_\_\_\_\_avoidance (such as not wanting to be around people, missing worship services and other church activities)

\_\_\_\_\_blaming God

\_\_\_\_\_blaming self and/or other people

\_\_\_\_\_others, specify \_\_\_\_\_



## Part II: Pain Experience

**Instruction:** Check on the space that corresponds to the option that best applies to you.

**The response options are:**

Strongly Agree – statement is acceptable to you 100% of the times

Agree – statement is acceptable to you 80% or more of the times

Not Sure

Disagree – statement is unacceptable to you 80% or more of the times

Strongly Disagree – statement is unacceptable to you 100% of the times

Pain Experience Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. Life's suffering makes an individual a better person.					
2. When life is at its worst, I know that the best is about to begin.					
3. Failures open doors to success					
4. What's coming is always better than what was					
5. There is always something good that the painful past brings					
6. God allows His children to be tempted by Satan through painful experiences					
7. A painful experience is a blessing in disguise					
8. God is definitely not in painful experiences					
9. God allows painful experiences to bless us					
10. A painful experience is a hindrance to life and joy					
11. All solutions to problems can be found in the bible					
12. When I am in pain, I know that God understands if I miss worship services					
13. It is fine to isolate myself from Christian friends when I am in pain.					
14. Frequently talking about our pains is helpful					
15. The first to know about my pains is my spouse (or my best friend as may be applicable)					
16. It is possible to be completely healed from painful experiences					
17. There is always a part of our painful experiences which will continue to haunt us					
18. I feel that I had been a victim of a painful past					
19. I can freely talk about my painful past without feeling any hurt at all					
20. Because of my painful experiences, I consider myself victorious					

## **APPENDIX B**

WEEK TWO: JOURNAL I;  
SESSION I, AND II; AND SERMON I

## Pain Experience Journal 1

Describe your personal pain experience.

### PARTICIPANT 1:

The death of my father was a painful experience for me. Even to this day that painful October day in 1959 continues to be a painful moment, yet I know what can take away the pain. Reminders of that day don't leave me because I found him minutes after speaking to him and my inability to release pictures from my mind. I will say that the memory of that day now brings some joy instead of sadness that I know is my growth in my God.

### PARTICIPANT 2:

My painful experience is pretty far reaching, meaning that my pain goes back pretty far in my life. My parents divorced when I was eleven and my dad moved back to Detroit. My father was my heart so I deeply missed him. He died when I was eighteen and I was lost for a while. Another painful experience was the failure of my marriage. I had what I will call a mini-nervous breakdown. I did not seek counseling or go to the doctor at that time, so I don't know if I was considered clinically depressed or not. I can also recall painful experiences like feeling inadequate, lonely, long periods of low self esteem throughout my life but I'm sure that everyone has those feelings from time to time. I've been laid off from my job 3 times. I would say that each time I was in a different place spiritually so it affected me differently each time. I still experience pain dealing with all the things that go with being a single parent and feeling like I'm not a good enough mother.

### PARTICIPANT 3:

At the age of twenty one, I found myself in an abusive relationship both physically and emotionally. In the situation I found myself fighting back and each time he would do something to me. As this continued for at least 6 months I knew that I had to find some way out of this relationship before he killed me or I killed him. When I got out of the relationship I started seeing that God was with me through it because of what He showed me and how He provided a way of escape. The death of my Grandmother in January 2009 will forever have an impact on my life. I had gone through the process of death with other family members and friends but this death was one that left a whole lot of pain. I loved my Grandmother and I would not believe she was now gone. I was truly angry at God for taking her. My mother, sister and I had to decide to take her off life support and watch her take her last breath. One thing God reminded me of through this process was that she belonged to Him and that I was blessed to have her for forty four years. Also He reminded me that I had a warm body to spend time with instead of coming to a cold

body which was already gone. It's taken awhile to get through the grieving process but I am well on my way.

#### PARTICIPANT 4:

My painful experience centers on the sudden death of my son, my one and only child, who died in the fall of 1989. He was a very bright 20 year old attending Carnegie Mellow University in Pittsburgh, PA. Even though his mother and I were separated parents, we both doted on him. But it must be made clear that my wife was completely devastated by the event. It was on a Friday night just before 2:00 a.m. that my wife called me at home with those awful words, "Michael has been killed." I thought it was some terrible joke, but once I understood, I began to hyperventilate and dropped to my knees in anguish. Michael had been racing thru the streets in an automobile while drunk. The police chased him and later the car flipped over killing him instantly. I was forced to fly to Pittsburgh the next day to identify him because my wife simply could not do it. It was one of the hardest tasks of my life.

#### PARTICIPANT 5:

I was fired from my job after 13 years of hard work and dedication because of a manager that had a personal vendetta against me though I had helped that person on their rise to the top. They saw and look upon me as a threat. With trials, tribulations, lies and setups/frame ups I was dismissed. Though I had fought it there was no way to avoid what I knew deep in my heart was coming. God starting preparing me in ways that I knew was only Him. In the midst of fighting the inevitable God began preparing me so when I received the news; I shocked them by having each one telling them how much I cared about them and will always keep them in my heart. Talk about stunned. They were and there wasn't a dry eye in the room. I told them I forgave them for what they did and thanks for the opportunity. Five years later I/we are still close and keep in contact. They asked for my forgiveness which I gave them. The culprit cause for this was later dismissed from the company.

#### PARTICIPANT 6:

The most personal pain I experience was when I was raped at the age of 8 years old. I lived in Arlington across the street from the church on Glebe Road. While I had family support, the anger and hurt still creeps in. Also, the loss of my father, although he and my mother separated because of domestic abuse, he died when I was 12 years old. I still feel as though I am fighting through the feelings of wanting to be loved. Seeking acceptance and validation through relationships and I'm realizing that some of those relationships were not healthy.

#### PARTICIPANT 7:

A feeling of not being pursued, rejection from family, and others I meet. Being misunderstood and not affirmed as a child. This particular issue has been cropping up lately as it relates to my

self-esteem. Feeling helpless as your child suffers. I have a child in prison and his behavior has been a long term problem and has produced a lot of stress and weariness. I constantly try to work on myself, but it seems to be of no avail to others, and makes me feel disconnected. Don't know how to handle compliments because I'm not sure if they are sincere and how the compliment stacks up against someone else's achievements. It is hard for me to find a balance.

#### PARTICIPANT 8:

My pain experiences usually come and go quickly. A couple that come to mind that lingered a little longer are a result of the death of my mother and a separate broken relationship that at one point I had high hopes that would lead to marriage. The pain of my mother's death was not so much the death itself, but the feeling that I didn't pray enough for her healing while she was alive. My mother and I were very close, but sometimes I feel that I failed her when the one thing that would have helped her the most was fervent prayer and fasting for her health and healing. Not that God would have changed His mind, but just knowing that I didn't do it nags at me every now and then and it has been almost sixteen years. The other was a relationship that at one time I thought was love. Even though I know now that the relationship was not best for me because it caused me a great deal of pain at times and for some reasons it lingered a little longer than usual. As I really think about it a little more, the greatest pain in my life came at the hand of schoolmates during my elementary and junior high school years. Children taunted me and isolated themselves from me because my skin was a few shades darker than theirs. Not the white children, but the black ones. While I believe this has built my character and made me a better person as an adult, it caused me a great deal of pain as a child. Even now, I don't allow people to get very close to me and I still don't trust other people with my feelings.

#### PARTICIPANT 9:

Losing my wife has brought much hurt and questions. Having my best friend to drift away brought a lot of bewilderment until recent developments which has brought some measure of understanding. Losing my parents and maternal grandmother was very painful.

#### PARTICIPANT 10:

I suffered from a back injury in 1988 and have since had two operations with some degenerative disc. Still recently I am tormented with pain and some depression and at times I am anti-social. The combination of my religious experience and my faith being renewed again in the Lord is a wonderful thing. Most former Jehovah's witnesses become Atheists, suicidal, or sexually promiscuous and at times I have experienced the latter. I have not touched anyone in our church in that way. I have over heard a Deacon at prayer service call me a liar after voicing a sentence prayer request for my mother who is very ill. This happened a few months ago. The accused Deacon denied its but I heard him very clearly. Also a music ministry leader has been extremely mean to me. I only tried to be kind to her at all times. She suddenly turned on me last year. I truly believe she is trying to run me out of this church. However, she will not succeed in her

wicked effort. The devil is using her as a vehicle to deter me from my Joy, because some people are Kill Joys, they try to steal away the Joy you have in serving the Lord. I have to persevere in prayer and press onto Christian maturity.

#### PARTICIPANT 11:

In 1994 I suffered a horrific knee injury. I torn my quad muscle displacing my patella tendon and torn some other tendon. The pain of that injury in the immediate moments following the injury was so intense, so painful that I would for a moment, would have been absolutely satisfied with suicide. The pain was so strong that I just wanted it to stop. Despite how much pain I was in, my initial reaction to the ambulance driver was to say that I was alright. From that painful experience I learned that in order to get better that I had to first honestly open my heart and understand that I needed to go to a place that could help me and get a doctor who could tell me what was wrong and how he could help me. This was followed by knowing that I had to commit to a painful rehabilitation period because it was the rehab that would restore me back to wholeness. Now some twenty years removed from the accident that brought me pain, I no longer have wound that hurts but a scar that only serves as a reminder of that painful period.

#### PARTICIPANT 12:

My pain has been my children. You try to live and mold them to grow up and be God fearing people. My upbringing included being brought up in a Christian home, necessarily to say, church on Sunday all day and every of day of the week. When I married and had children of my own—we tried to mold our kids the same way—Sunday school, church services, anything that we thought would help them to become God fearing adults. As we all know, it works on some and you fail miserably with others, but then we were not promised that it would be easy, you win some and lose others. They are all practicing Christians however, only God knows what goes through their minds. When something Catastrophe happens in the family, we can come together or pull in different directions. On 26 December 2007 we lost a Grandson who had just turned the age of 25 years old on December 18<sup>th</sup>, had his life taken from him by the hand of my oldest, not only did she take his life but attempted to take her own. God was not ready for her yet. She was incarcerated for three years. She had lost her job, her house was being repossessed, my grandson was a special needs kid and she was being threatened with having to put into an insane asylum. Upon entering prison, being put on suicide watch and drugged heavily, they finally tried and found her guilty giving her 3 years. The judge expressed concern that this was one of the saddest cases he'd had to try. She was stripped of her RN license by the State of Ohio. Once she was moved to the women's prison, she became involved and worked with the prison ministry, participated and programs that they would allow. When she was discharged she was to go to the Catholic Charities home for rebuilding, but when they told her she would not be able to attend the Baptist church and they would only support her if she became Catholic, she turned it down. So she decided to come home, joined church, and began trying to pull her life back together. Seeing that her credentials were gone, what does she do? She has lost sight in one eye, she is

diabetic, has fibromyalgia, is still mentally depressed. I sometimes feel helpless. Maybe I'm expecting too much too soon. She didn't get to say goodbye to her Father or attend the services. I pray a lot to God, I can't change her but he can. He's the only person that can forgive her, not me or the Christians who pronounce her guilty. I'm so glad we all have to go by him, none of us is perfect. Matthew 9:11 says, for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. Luke 19:10 says – For the son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost. You can go to heaven, no matter how bad your sin is.

### PARTICIPANT 13:

I have to say one of the most hurtful disappointments of my life was on a Saturday in September 1993. I was at a point in my life where I was growing and getting tired of my lives situation of not establishing a home church and not having a full relationship with God. I had just broken off a relationship with a on again off again boyfriend of 15 years. My car broke down 2 days after the break-up and I telephoned my mother, whom at the time owned two vehicles, (a car and a van) to see if I could borrow one of them. To my disappointment, she said, she would need the van to carry my father to VA hospital for a check-up sometime during the upcoming week. I was a hurt by this response but she was not my last resort. I told her I would call my brother in-law (at the time him and I worked at the same place) and see if he could swing by and pick me up on his way in to work. At the time, he and my sister were out of town for the weekend. Therefore, I left a message for him to call me when they got back. He called Sunday night after they got in. He said, he did not mind picking me up and what he would do was pick me up in the morning, and we would ride together to work, and when we got off, I would go with him home and he would lend me the car until mine was out of the shop. Wow! This was an unexpected blessing. I believe I kept his car three weeks. You may wonder so, where is the hurt? I was hurt because after all that I had done over the years for my mother she rejected me the first time in my adult life that I asked for her help. My nephew, a few months after this incident, totaled his car and she lent him the van. He blew the engine in the van and she had to pay to have somebody to tow the van from Maryland to Virginia. This part of the story, I did not find out about until months after the van was damaged. My mother was not the one that told me about this incident. I got it through the family grapevine. was extremely hurt, because my though process is, as of any offspring's, should be I am her flesh and blood and she could not lend me her van, I would have taken better care of her property just because that is how I was brought up. However, because her grandson is showing her some attention, she treats him differently from her own daughter. For this, I was angry and very hurt, and I still carry the pain. She has never talked about this with me. Once, my aunt brought up the incident about me borrowing the car once and she said she did not remember this happening.

## Session I and II Outline

### Identifying the Pain

“Moving The Wounded To Wholeness”

Opening Prayer	11:00 a.m.	Reverend Campbell
Welcome	11:05 a.m.	Reverend Campbell
Introduction	11:05-11:10 a.m.	Reverend Campbell
Survey Questions	11:10-11:30 a.m.	Reverend Campbell
<b>(Pain Experience Survey)</b>		
Session I	11:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m.	Dr. Ballard
<b>(Pain, the Birthing Place for a New Beginning)</b>		
Session II	12:10-12:40 p.m.	Reverend Campbell
<b>(Goal Setting, Mental Imaging)</b>		
Closing Remarks	12:50-12:55 p.m.	Reverend Campbell

## SESSION I AND II TRANSCRIPTIONS

The following transcriptions for Sessions I and II of the researcher’s *Transformative Ministry* model reveal a complete dictation of commentary shared with the context group by the respective speakers mentioned in the above *Identifying the Pain* outline. Please note, the inaudible responses of each speaker during their respective presentations are represented with bracketed references with the corresponding time in seconds.

SPEAKER 1:

Identified it as pain being a birthing place for Luther James. As a part of your packet, there is a handout where you can follow [inaudible 00:00:10] and one of the things that we have a tendency to do when we have painful experiences, hurtful, disappointing times in our life, we have a tendency sometimes to focus on the cause of it versus the effect of it. And what we are more concerned with is not necessarily what caused it or what happened and why did this person leave you? How come you feel that at this particular venture? But [inaudible 00:00:34] are impacting you right now today. What the enemy has a tendency to do, [inaudible 00:00:40] caught up in terms of what happened versus allowing you to see how it is impacting you right now. What I honestly believe is that no matter what painful experience that you may have had in your life, it serves as a platform for the next move of God in your life because wherever there is a weakness that exists within an individual, God has power to come in and he can release his



power into the midst of that particular weakness that you may have and move you into a place of [inaudible 00:01:14]. At the same time, it shows you the possibilities that God has for your individual life. Whatever it is that you may have experienced or you may have been experiencing, it's a meeting place. It's where God wants to engage you at the most and one of the scriptures that I'm using as a foundational piece on my doctoral degree is Exodus, the third chapter verses 7-10 and that's where Moses first began to start conversating with God and God begins to declare that "Our Savior [inaudible 00:01:55] my people [inaudible] that's why I'm sending you now Moses to deliver them." One of things that is paramount in that particular text is the fact where it says that I have heard their cry. In other words, as Israel began to cry out, God now hears their cry and it almost seemed as though that Israel [inaudible 00:02:24] bondage but they got to the point where they were comfortable in bonds. They got to the point where they could manage the effect of what was going on in their environment. They were not in the promise land that God had promised to them but yet they were comfortable and the reason why we know that they were comfortable, because there was no [inaudible 00:02:44]. It wasn't until the scripture says, "Then there arouse a [inaudible 00:02:49] who knew not Joseph and when [inaudible] who knew not Joseph and begin to afflict the Israelites, then the Israelites began to start crying out." One of the most important things that we as a people must do, would be going to the challenging times, the hard times is to find our voice. Is to be able to cry out unto God. One of the things that [inaudible 00:03:20] wants to do is to try to put so much on your shoulder that you would keep your mouth shut. The Egyptians, they did not like their slaves; they would rather have their slaves to be docile, to be quiet, to be meek and mild but when Israel starts crying out, [inaudible 00:03:41] they are breaking with the traditions, breaking with the laws of Egypt, and the text does not say exactly why they cry out because it was not God-induced nor does it say who they were crying to but of course it does say that God heard their cry and as you begin to start crying out to God, God declared that I will hear your cry. Crying out is not the same thing as praying because the scripture doesn't say that I heard their prayer, but I heard their cry. Because sometimes [inaudible 00:04:15] can be so much that is pressing down on you that all you can do is cry out to God for help [inaudible 00:04:23] rather by every fiber in your body, you begin to start crying out and God declares that if you cry out to me I will answer you and show you great and mighty things that you knoweth not. And whenever we cry out to God, God remembered. So as Israel is now crying out to God, God remembered the promise, the covenant that he established with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and because he remembered the covenant that [inaudible 00:04:59] and because he heard their cry, now God must act to deliver his people. I'm going to skip [inaudible 00:05:12] turn the page but I want to interject something right here that I already have in the paper. I remember why this crying out is so important. I remember in 1968-1969, I was only six years old and I was in the first grade, but Vietnam was hot and heavy during that time and in the small, little country town that I grew up in, I witnessed one cousin that got killed in Vietnam. [inaudible 00:05:41] another cousin who got shot up in Vietnam. I witnessed a neighbor who lost his mind in Vietnam and I witnessed another neighbor who got killed in Vietnam. Now, my brother gets a draft notice that he is now being drafted into the army so within my mental framework, I'm seeing that the same thing that happened...I'm seeing what I have already seen happen could potentially be the same thing that's going to happen to my brother but now I start crying out to God on his behalf. I started saying God wait a minute, you've got to do something. I don't know what you're going to do but I see what the script says because the script is already written that if you leave here going to Vietnam, you are either going to get killed or you are going to get shot up. [inaudible 00:06:39] can't you see what's going on?

We are a family of five. My father got killed before I was born. My mother is a widow. Are you going to now allow her oldest son to get killed in Vietnam? So as a I child I was crying out to God, God you must do something! But what I did not know at that particular time, is that I had stumbled into [inaudible 00:07:08] that God had already laid, he'd already written, and I believe that he wrote it just for me. If you flip over to the third page, Exodus 22 verses 20-24, it says that, "You shall [inaudible 00:07:37] or a fatherless child, for if they shall continue cry unto me, I will surely hear them and my wrath will [inaudible 00:07:50]," and it goes onto say, "And I make your children's father." In other words, God is saying that if he cries unto me, I'm going to hear him but even before I was born, God was thinking of me [inaudible 00:08:06] protection and provisions for me because he knew that I was going to come down the pathway that I was walking [inaudible 00:08:13] category so now that I began to cry out unto him, what happens? He heard my cry. It wasn't until I was an adult in the army, that I fully began to understand how he heard and answered my cry because yes my brother went in the army but God veered him off from Vietnam; he sent him to Korea. I had no idea where Korea was, but God sent him to some place as a safekeeping to protect him where the dying and the killing was. This past December he retired at the age of 62, God did what? He heard my cry. Now the thing that is critical in crying out because as a child I did not know how God was going to answer. I did have the mental capacity to try and analyze what God was going to do. I simply trusted that God was going to hear me and that God was going to deliver me. So as you begin to cry out, do not allow your mind to become in tune to the circumstances in your environment where you begin to try and mentally determine how God is going to do it. God, I don't know how you're going to do it; I just trust that you will. Does that make sense? Who has a bible?

MALE: [Inaudible 00:09:48] but I left it in the car but I do [inaudible] [laughing].

MALE: [Inaudible 00:09:58] one question [laughing].

SPEAKER 1:

[Inaudible 00:10:07] bible, please turn to [inaudible] the fifth chapter, verses 16-22. Make sure that you have a voice. [Inaudible 00:10:20] chapter verses 16-22. [Inaudible 00:10:26] their voice and began to start crying out," and God [inaudible] does what? God moves and he acts upon [inaudible]. If you are willing to cry, God is willing to answer. [Inaudible 00:10:40] fifth chapter verses 16-22. "So here's all the [inaudible 00:10:50] into the wilderness and prayed. Now we have not a certain day as he was teaching that there were [inaudible] and teachers of the law sitting by who had come out of every town of Galilee, Judea and Jerusalem and the power of the Lord was present to heal them. Behold, man brought about [inaudible] a man who was paralyzed and they saw [inaudible] before him. And when they could not find how they might bring him in because the [inaudible], they went on the house top and [inaudible 00:11:37] through the [inaudible] into the midst before Jesus. When he saw their pain he said to him, "Man, your sons have forgiven you." Okay, let's go right there. "And it came to pass on the seventh day [inaudible 00:12:00]" and you can skip pass the part what he says about the [inaudible] and stop at the part where he says as he was teaching, the power of God was present to heal. And then the next step is when the friend took the paralyzed man and took him to the rooftop. So in other words, as God word is being taught and you receive his word, there should be a corresponding action on your behalf that benotes that I received and now I'm going to act

upon what I'm being taught. The corresponding action was that the friend who took a paralyzed man and brought him into the presence of Jesus. As Jesus is teaching, and he had to have been teaching about the [inaudible 00:12:42] and the teachings about healing because [inaudible 00:12:49] somebody to demonstrate that he can demonstrate his healing powers too. And the scripture says, "When he saw" what? Their faith. [Inaudible 00:13:00]. When you bring forth the corresponding action, it shows or demonstrates to God your faith in action. The next one is [inaudible 00:13:14]. At some point, [inaudible] had to [inaudible] what is this great commotion? And they said, "Jesus of Nazareth is passing by." And then a crowd, he started crying out Jesus [inaudible] have mercy on me and they told him to shut up. But the more they told him to shut up, what did he do? The more that he began to cry out. And there is something very key in this scripture that I want to lift up for your hearing. Of all the voices that were going on around Jesus [inaudible], on the count of three...I want you all to scream out, whatever is on your mind, I just want you to scream out. But [inaudible], I just want you to whisper something on the count of three. One, two, three [screaming] [laughing]. In the midst of all your screaming and the midst of all your yelling, Jesus did not hear that but he heard the voice of the man crying out, "Jesus thou son of Nazareth" [inaudible 00:14:46] have mercy on me. When you begin to cry out and preach, it puts you on a different frequency that empowers God to hear you over all the other chatter that's going on because when he heard [inaudible] it caused him to stop flat-footed and commanded [inaudible] brought to his presence. Now, the question now becomes what are you crying? What you're saying is it coming into the presence of God? Are you crying out in faith or are you just making noise? Because he's not listening for them. His ears are not in tuned for the noise but his ears are in tune for those who are crying out to him in faith and if you are crying out to him in [inaudible 00:15:37] he's going to turn. And when you call [inaudible], notice he asked him a question. Jesus [inaudible] nobody's [inaudible] but he did not immediately proceed to do what [inaudible]. In John chapter 9, [inaudible] blind man. The blind man doesn't say anything to Jesus. Jesus went over to the blind man [inaudible] on his eye [inaudible] but now he has [inaudible 16:06] presence. He did not receive the [inaudible] immediately [inaudible], but he asked him the question, what can I do for [inaudible]? In other words Jesus is saying, your faith is so strong, just...here's a blank check. You write it in, I'll underscore it. Whatever you [inaudible], what do you want? [Inaudible]. What you want God to do is to give you a blank check. Is that chair too small for you?

MALE: [Inaudible]. No, I'm good.

SPEAKER 1:

He is offering his foot as a teaching moment for this class on pain [laughing] saying that sometimes you have to stretch in places where you don't necessarily want to [inaudible] for to get the kind of deliverance and release that you want. If you're comfortable with your pain, then just keep it [inaudible] in one position.

MALE: Wow, that's [inaudible] [laughing].

SPEAKER 1:

But if you want deliverance like [inaudible 00:17:20] did, they got to what? Forget about the folks around you and if you can't [inaudible] sometimes you cannot feel your way out, he couldn't see his way so the only thing he could do is what? Lift up is voice unto the presence of God. Lift us voice unto the presence of Jesus. And Jesus heard him and did what? Come here, he said come here [inaudible]. When he asks you the question, because as the word of God is being taught, God [inaudible], so as I'm teaching it, the next step is that he's going to ask what you want? And when he asks you what you want, be prepared to give him an answer.

SPEAKER 2:

[Inaudible 00:18:28] that God interceded in your case and prevented as opposed to [inaudible] situation probably where we experience the pain and the we [inaudible] now. I was in the midst of a painful [inaudible]. Cheryl knows what I'm getting ready to say because you read my spiritual autobiography that she's doing something for me [inaudible 00:19:02] program. But remember now, this was in 1969; I was born in April of 1962 and my father got killed in September of 1961. Mom was raising five children by herself in rural South Carolina. There is no running water in the home. There is not thermostat that you just go click on. What you had was a wood-burning [inaudible]. It got so hard on her that I witnessed her [inaudible] threw it in the heater and burned it. That's the pain that's present in the home and the next thing is, my brother gets drafted in the military so I as a young child [inaudible] and for whatever reason I've always thought, that through that experience, even as a child that time was going to come where God will begin to use it as a capacity or as a teaching experience that would be able to teach others. So it was already in the midst of pain, but I'm asking God to intercede now. Not that you're not already there, but I can see the direction. I saw the direction that I thought things were going to do if there was not intervention by God. That's why I began to [inaudible 00:20:31].

MALE:

Well I think that [inaudible] situations where, probably have been in where we were trying to overt things but it seems to me it's very different situation. See, the pain you described means [inaudible 00:21:04] pain [inaudible]. If you're trying out God about the economy, about the misery that my family is in and that kind of thing, that's more [inaudible] to the pain that I experienced after the experience occurred then up comes all this pain about it. [Inaudible] your brother going to Vietnam, if God interceded in that and prevented death from occurring.

SPEAKER 1:

Please don't [inaudible] lack of understanding so I may have perceived it as being pain primarily because I could not understand why one home in a neighborhood setting was a void of a father while every other house in the neighborhood had it. Both parents in the home, both parents work, but as I grew older [inaudible] not in the military, now I'm listening to the older folk in the neighborhood and their testimony is, you know what? Those children have done far better than children in the neighborhood who had both parents there, both parents [inaudible 00:22:32]. Now [inaudible] hand of God is moving in the midst of it the entire time but because there was a

lack of understanding on my particular part because they know [inaudible], I couldn't see that. But as I grew older, I see it now more clearly. Remember when I said that the scripture was written just for me? [Inaudible] scriptures, why would [inaudible] this pain for you. Why does scripture and take it and make it your own? [Inaudible] typical to your own individual life, to your own individual situation.

FEMALE: I don't know if that always happens that you can actually [inaudible] because I had cried out one day about you know the marriage situation and how it was affecting my kids [inaudible 00:23:35]. I'm older, you know it's like when you have an encounter [inaudible], it's one thing because you're older you think you can take it but how it's affecting the children that [inaudible] said didn't ask to come into the world and what if you know [inaudible] open and the scripture, I will [laughing] [inaudible] with them that [inaudible] with thee and I will [inaudible] the children. I mean that was what was written for me but I don't know at that point of desperation that I could of looked through the bible to find anything. I was tired, I was just desperate. Yeah, God I think will lead you to a lot of different things. I would not [inaudible 00:24:32].

SPEAKER 1:

One thing that stems from being involved with a cult religion, calls themselves the Jehovah's witnesses, I spent 15 years of life there and I [inaudible] many long term friends and will never begin to see [inaudible]. Deuteronomy [inaudible] here, [inaudible] verses 20-22 where it says what the [inaudible] to speak a word in my name which I have not commanded him to speak or who speaks in the name of [inaudible] that prophet shall die and if you say in your heart, how shall we know that the word which the Lord has not spoken." Verse 22. "When a prophet speaks the name of the Lord, if the thing does not happen or come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord has not spoken. The prophet has spoken if [inaudible] he shall not be afraid of him. So this all seems to appreciate [inaudible], this will help you to appreciate long before I left the cult that many times throughout the [inaudible] I begin to see the errors [inaudible] and that is what's [inaudible] but they use the fear and mind control tactic on all the members of the group so once I began to break myself from it, most people that [inaudible] they either become an atheist, they commit suicide or they just become a sexually promiscuous person [inaudible] have no hope. So I went for years and years, and finally the Lord [inaudible] the Lord spoke to my heart, I came to visit [inaudible] in the area but a friend had suggested I visit Mt. Zion so I came to visit Mt. Zion and it's like my faith was renewed here.

MALE: Amen [inaudible] thank God.

MALE: You have about four minutes left.

SPEAKER 1:

[Inaudible] woman with the issue of blood [inaudible] fifth chapter verses 25-35 and she said [inaudible] I know that I shall be made [inaudible]. And she said within herself, "If I but touch

his clothes I know I shall be made whole." If you are going to go from being broken to being [inaudible] there's a couple of things you got to do. You have to watch your internal conversation, watch the things that you are saying to yourself about yourself. She's got a picture of where she wants to be. She has a picture of being whole in her mind then her actions start moving her in the direction which she wanted to go. She got the picture and her communication was in accordance with the picture that she had captured in her mind. You notice she doesn't say anything about her pain. She doesn't say anything about her past. She started talking about her potential. She started talking about her possibilities. She started talking about the things that she wanted. Notice she talked about what she wanted versus what the circumstances [inaudible] should receive. The circumstances would have said that you're going to get another failed doctor, you're going to get another failed experience, you're going to have another year with an issue. But she said to herself, "If I can just touch his clothes, I know I will be [inaudible 00:28:42]. She didn't mention anything about her past. She only talked about her future. She talked about what [inaudible 00:28:50] happen. What she desired began to consume her to the point that it moved her in the direction of her [inaudible]. It moved her in the direction of where she wanted to go irregardless of what people might say or what people might think because in her condition, she was unclean and she wasn't even supposed to be out. She got to the point where she said I just don't care about what people say or what people think. I see the opportunity for change and because I see an opportunity for change, I am going to move and touch his clothes. Again, a corresponding action. Somewhere she heard about Jesus. Somewhere she received [inaudible 00:29:36]. Somewhere [inaudible] she heard the word of God [inaudible] and her corresponding actions were to do what? Touch. That's where she released her faith. When she released her faith, instantly she felt within herself changed. [Inaudible] and although I have more information to continue on, I must give way to Reverend [inaudible] who's going to come to the next session. What questions do you have?

FEMALE: I don't have a question but [inaudible] but I want to thank you for inviting me [inaudible 00:30:13] already I'm feeling...I'm just feeling so good [inaudible] and see my life flashing through my head as you talk about your life and it's so parallel to mine and when you talked about your mother walking with the bible and putting it in the fire, my mother didn't do that but she [inaudible] put children around her and bible was gone, [inaudible] around her and in my bible you said the Lord is shepherd of his people and that's my scripture because she would always say to us, I want you to know that God has everything we need and in the 23rd psalm you can find for every [inaudible] that you need is in there and so she taught that to us and I believe that day [inaudible] me to be where [inaudible].

SPEAKER 1:

[Inaudible] bible [inaudible 0] Jesus about praying. [Inaudible]. Kept right on praying, kept right on going to church, kept right on hearing the word but see the enemy can put so much on you, they can paint such a bleak picture if you let them and makes you feel so hopeless that there is no way out and what I'm saying is that yeah, faith can change because God is the change agent. The only thing we got to do is to reach out to him and to open up to him [inaudible 00:31.54].

SPEAKER 2:

Well, we are talking a whole lot today, we're talking about pain. One thing I discovered about pain is pain is normal. There is no way that you get around it. Like I was talking to somebody the other day [inaudible] he was telling me how [inaudible] issues and his goal was not to [inaudible] an argument, his goal was not to [inaudible] pain that had been afflicted, had come upon their marriage. So he was avoiding [inaudible] can't avoid pain. People get scared of it, [inaudible] pain is a normal emotion and all of us are going to feel it and some point in our life and sometimes it is recurring. You can't avoid it, in fact I'm one of those people that kind of like pain; I like [inaudible] if you've been in my office I like the variety of emotion because our emotions are indicators that God has given us so that we can better know how things are affecting us and then we know how it's affecting us then we are in a position where we can communicate with God because we know what's in our soul, what's [inaudible] pit is and then it puts us in a place where we can better [inaudible]. And you just can't avoid it unless you are going to live somewhere totally by yourself and then never [inaudible], particularly if you are going to be in any type of relationships it's just that there are periods when there are going to be some issues [inaudible] it doesn't have to be a romantic one, doesn't have to be marriage, it could be a friendship, it could be a [inaudible], it could definitely be a church person [inaudible], there's no way we can...you know pain sometimes comes you can't avoid it and you know there is normal but sometimes it's just unexpected because you just don't expect that you are going to lose your child. You don't expect that somebody is going to betray you. You don't expect that something ain't going to get [inaudible 00:33:57]. You just don't expect it and because you don't expect it, you can be like dancing around, happy and joyful and out of nowhere this experience comes and bang, here comes the pain. One of our former members, she wrote on Facebook this week, [inaudible] we got the same page, she says, "Well, [inaudible] life has ended and she says now my pain begins," you might think you'll might know what I'm talking about, "My life [inaudible], life has ended and now my pain begins and so she was crying out about this pain. I don't know if she expected [inaudible] to die but she recognizes that her pain is about to come. You know what I like about pain though is that it can bring you to another existence with yourself. It can bring you to another fulfillment. I like to quote Solomon, he says, "I would rather be in a house where people are grieving. I would rather be around people who are like having sorrows or in pain [inaudible]. You know I like [inaudible] but he says I'd rather be with those people than to be with people who are partying. Because he says people are partying just like happy-go-lucky but people who are grieving, they [inaudible 00:35:16] deep thoughts and they start seeing [inaudible]. You know you can engage in some really good conversations and also you can get some [inaudible] so pain can lead us into some great fulfillment. And I don't know...we don't have a lot of time right now, but I was kind of wondering like I would really if we had the whole day, I know you are busy people [inaudible] but I would really like to go around the room and hear everybody's pain but I know we don't have that kind of time, but really what is it that's truly your pain though? And it's almost like...what is that thing that it's getting you, if you could [inaudible] capture it in words or [inaudible] what is that pain? So if you say that it's normal, if you say it's unavoidable, if you say sometimes it's unexpected, but you say sometimes it can lead to fulfillment or even some fun, so why is pain an issue? Why don't we all just have pain, pain, pain! Pain all the while. [Inaudible] somebody said that pain, [inaudible].

MALE: [Inaudible 00:36:27] I here you like pain brings joy [inaudible].

SPEAKER 2:

[Inaudible] Some fulfillment because it helps you to think about stuff a little deeper because [inaudible] let me clarify, thank you [inaudible], you know why is losing this job so...why is it causing you so much pain? Why is this relationship causing me so much pain? Why? [Inaudible 00:36:53] it can help you to discover like well, what I did to lead to this breakup? And learning those lessons can make your next relationship more fulfilling. So it causes you to [inaudible], it can help you to explore, it can help you go to another place within yourself.

MALE: I call it a [inaudible] process because what happens is when you are outside of the pain, you don't have to examine anything because [inaudible] the way you wanted it to happen.

SPEAKER 2: Good.

MALE: So you move about now [inaudible] somebody whose [inaudible] lies above [inaudible]. You know they would love to feel pain but the fact is they can't. So often times if you [inaudible] saying if [inaudible] you know this is an opportunity to sit back and figure out, okay, how do I...[inaudible] what lesson is God trying to give me in this thing?

SPEAKER 2:

It can be all of that. Let me say for the average person that I talk to usually is not but [inaudible] can be but often times, [inaudible 00:38:06] you know often times it's not that. Often times, they say time heals everything but it doesn't. You could be in pain. I know some people when I go back to New York, they are still crying about something [inaudible 00:38:24] years, I'm like lady let it go. [Inaudible] different than, please let it go. But I tell people, I'm still holding onto [inaudible] where you begin to really get into that, what is it? When you are crying, when you get into that pain and you begin to cry out, [inaudible 00:38:43] needs it, that can bring you to another place but often times, people just...and God does not want us...it's my theology, that God does not want you to exist [inaudible] whole life and pain talking about what you went through, what you've been through. [Inaudible 00:39:00] God wants to bring you to a place [inaudible] going it's a new level but often what happens is that pain becomes are wounds and then we get stuck in that and then we kind of just get normal. You know it's [inaudible] like this, but there are some people who are always talking about the same story over and over again and that's because you're stuck, you're stuck! Because that happened a long time ago and you are still talking about the same thing and that's what can happen. It can become a normal part of your life and that's just how you see yourself when you look in the mirror because that's it. Now this is my theory in that there is a time to have pain but often what happens with a lot of us is that we stay there too long. This thing [inaudible] I love this [inaudible 00:39:52] it's going to be a part of my book. [Inaudible] the first day here at Mt. Zion and I never took it down...[inaudible]...it's been up here ever since. Look at this for a second. What happens, you go through some experience and then you down and you have a raw pain [inaudible] different. Pain is just [inaudible] hurtful feeling. Sometimes the pain can be in the form of guilt, the shame, the disgrace, and to go on to all these different emotions and what happens to a lot of us



because society doesn't really teach us to process emotions and all this and with folks like me [inaudible] but the average person, you know society doesn't teach us that and I think our schools should teach our children to be emotionally intelligent. I just mean you know what your emotions are, [inaudible 00:40:41] articulate but what happens is we get stuck here often too long but I've discovered that what can happen is we get stuck here too long. It could be a month, it could be a year, it could be your whole life, but if you ever get to that point when you have dealt with that pain so long and you said, "God, I need some rescue!" You know God's bringing you out of it. Do you ever cry out like that? What I have discovered is you could be here and what God then does is he hears your cry and he'll bring you to a whole new place, better than you've ever been, but you really have to get it and you have to take that pain and then you have to cry out to God with what you want.

MALE: [Inaudible 00:41:30].

SPEAKER 2:

You have to cry out to God with what you want. There was a, I don't even know the year that it was but, it was the year...do you ever have one of those years where everything is crashing down on you. You know, that particular year I lost my best friend, my brother had passed away, he was the first one in our immediate family to go and that first one is always the hardest one of them all, real hard. But if you are a young guy like I was, that really threw me for a loop. It's my best friend who passed away, I had a profile job and suddenly out of nowhere were those [inaudible 00:42:09] people, who I cannot remember now anyway [laughing] [inaudible 00:42:17]. You know my brother's stuff, I'm dealing with all the changes within the family, I dealing with losing a high-profile job...it was a job that I was making more money than anybody on my block, I was one of the young whipper-snapper. [Inaudible 00:42:30] stupid but I was like this genius, they gave me this high-profile...so I lost it [inaudible 00:42:39] Jesus, like...all this pain and you just get to that point where you say I just can't take it no more. I don't want to feel this no more. [Inaudible 00:42:53] [somebody walks into the room]. Anyway, what I did...[inaudible 00:43:08] had so much pain...you ever been in so much pain you just wanted to die? I don't know, but I really was. I was younger then, I didn't have the maturity and I was still kind new in Christ and just wanted to die. I was in New Jersey, I was away from home and I was thinking about different ways I can do it, I was like I can stab myself but that might hurt [laughing], I don't have a gun I can't shoot myself and the pills, I don't think that's going to work. So I was under a lot of pain and I was like, dude you just don't have it. You [inaudible 00:43:44] try to kill yourself you know so I went and I got on my knees and I cried out to God and he spoke to me. After I told him about all the pain of my brother, the job and in that moment, I heard the voice God and I told him what I wanted which was deliverance from this pain and he told me what to do next. So what I'm saying is in your pain, you could exist and go on for the rest of your life dysfunctional, unhappy, [inaudible 00:44:14] or you can really cry out to God with what you want. Now we believe that when you are crying out to God, you have to [inaudible 00:44:24] Reverend Campbell said, you got to begin to [inaudible 00:44:27] what is it that you want. What happens is a lot of us, we cry out but we don't know what we want! We cry out but we don't know what we want and [inaudible 00:44:37] you cry out, we don't know what we want so wind up just like staying in that circle, you know we want deliverance but we don't really know particularly what we want. And I believe if you have been wounded and going

through something because pain is something that can capture you if you don't have the skills, you can stay stuck. If you really want to go into a place of wholeness, you got to have a vision of you want, a vision. You got to have a vision. We talked about Deaconess [inaudible 00:45:10] a couple weeks ago at bible studies; that's what happened with a lot of people now, they don't believe in miracles. They go through something and they just give up, this is my life, I will just be this way the rest of my life. This is just how it is and they lose sight that God can perform miracles or they lose sight that you can have a vision and then move toward a God to help you move towards it. I believe visions that come from God can be planted down into your soul, even in your pain, is a vision that God has implanted in you for your life and when you are very clear with that vision, because what does the bible say about people without a vision [inaudible 00:45:55] [audience] a clear cut vision. And what happens [inaudible 00:46:08] example of what I mean here. You have to have faith folks [inaudible 00:46:19] [laughing]...I come up with crazy stuff. But you got to have a vision, like you talk about oh, what happened to me, well this happened or that, but if you don't have a vision then [inaudible 00:46:33] Jesus is kind of like [inaudible 00:46:36] I mean your vision should be as clear as possible. Now what I like about visions because it's coming from you, it's in your soul, it's whatever you want! It's your vision! It's not what other people say you should do [inaudible 00:46:49] it's your life, this is your vision. And this is the example of one of our people that came in. She really went through a horrible divorce filled with a lot of pain and because she cried out regarding her pain from her divorce, she's in no pain now, I mean this is like a miracle. When you can through a painful divorce and got manipulated by a brother and then say, I don't even want the money. I know that you owe me \$10,000 but I want to be free so much, I don't even want that money. And then if you are in a place where you are happy again and you go on with your life and that's where she is. She's happy, she's been delivered from the pain and now she's [inaudible 00:47:32]. So [inaudible 00:47:32] sitting there and I'd say [inaudible 00:47:36] better, you know got through that experience and [inaudible 00:47:38] not bitter and you're free but what do you want? What's your vision? Well, I don't know, I wanted to be married but I don't want that no more. And I said no, [inaudible 00:47:52] you were married, your vision was to be what? She says it was to be in a Christian partnership. I said but you can still have that vision, what it was we just had the wrong dude, but you don't let go of the vision, that was wrong one and so I asked her, you have to get up [inaudible 00:48:11] but you have to really be honest with yourself and she was like, no I'm just going to be single and just do whatever and so we got to the point where she was able to write down, "I want to be in a Christian partnership and I want to have children and be in a comfortable home." Because she's getting up in age now and she was thinking, well [inaudible 00:48:26] that's your vision. And when you have a vision, you just can't have like...say this is where God [inaudible 00:48:34], if you're going to have a vision, you have to have some goals with it. I think what happens with a lot of people...you know I want to be a movie star. My vision is I'm going to be the next Denzel Washington. [inaudible 00:48:48] [laughing] I'm going to be the next Denzel Washington or you're going to be the what [inaudible 00:48:55] so people have these visions but often what happens with it, you can't just have a vision. Yes, it's got to be clear but it also has to be so [inaudible 00:49:09]. If I gave you the vision and I'm [inaudible 00:49:10], you should be able to [inaudible 00:49:14] with that thing, that's how clear it should be. And so [inaudible 00:49:15] vision, you also have to have goals. For example, she wants to be in a marriage with children in a comfortable home, so right now as you can imagine, you've been through a bad relationship a marriage, you don't trust God [inaudible 00:49:33] too much. I mean that's just normal kind of like you go through something

with somebody, you think [inaudible 00:49:41] restore trust in men again. How are you going to fix this if you don't trust men [inaudible 00:49:48] relationship? She said, "I got some friends but I don't really know what they [inaudible 00:49:52]." I said, "Well he's [inaudible 00:49:54]." She doesn't want to do all that and she said, "Guys that are talking to me on the street and [inaudible 00:50:06] wrong thing so you know I'm not getting with them." I said [inaudible 00:50:10], I'll just hook you up with somebody from the church. I mean [laughing], he's going through the same thing anyway, he got divorced, he knows [inaudible 00:50:22] [laughing]. The goal was to put her in a place where she could talk to men again so she could develop a healthy relationship and eventually be with the person that God has intended and then [inaudible 00:50:43]. Let me tell you, this is so great. This is so great, this is so great [laughing]. So I [inaudible 00:50:50] too right? Tell him to say well who is she? I know she's not trying to get married, I know you don't want to date, just as a friend. You need to trust woman again and she needs to trust...I just want you to meet. I think internally [inaudible 00:51:08] they have integrity the way they have handled their marriages, [inaudible 51:12] that was amazing. [Inaudible 00:51:16] and release the person after they both got squashed, amazing. So I'm thinking inside that...anyway so they go out. The first time they go out for six hours and they haven't stopped! They haven't stopped since then, they're friends but what is happening between the two of them and this is her vision, right? So now she knows one man that she can trust. It's been like 6-7 weeks, she has a [inaudible 00:51:44] and they are developing into what they call like best friendships. So this girl right here is going and she's coming to bible studies, she worships, so she's enhancing her spiritual life. Part of her marriage was she was kind of, you know, let me just say it, she needed to increase her physical level and that was part of what was going on in her marriage. So she needed to be familiar with her body, let me put it that way so that she could within a marriage setting, so she could enjoy her sexuality [laughing]. So now she is taking swimming lessons, [inaudible 00:52:26]. So now she is developing, her goal was to increase her [inaudible] so now her energy level is coming up, she is more in touch with her body, all of these things are now feeding into her vision and somebody says, and you might be saying this too, all right I get that. So you can have a vision, you can have a...oh let me just tell this quick. So y'all remember the story [inaudible 00:52:53] but you might have heard me say twice but I think it's [inaudible] so I'm just going to put it out there anyway. You've heard this story about my dad, after my mother passed and they had been married 52 years and so [inaudible 00:53:09] he was like 78 and I knew he was going to go down to that deep depression and grief, all that pain so I had to come out here and visit me and paying him to do stuff for me around my house, money I didn't have, and he's doing all this stuff...you know [inaudible 00:53:23] crying and stuff so I ain't noticed it for awhile because I knew he was in a lot of pain so then after like 7-8 months, dude, really? I can't take it. What do you want? I mean [inaudible 00:53:37] this much pain or cry and be like this for the rest of your life? He says out of nowhere, he says [inaudible 00:53:49] so he says, "I want a woman" and I said, "You want a what?" [laughing]. You want a woman! But I thinking in my head, a woman when you are 79 years old? This is what I'm saying in my head. He says, "I want a woman." [Inaudible 00:54:17] I was like, "Really, you want a woman?" and he said, "Yeah!" [Inaudible 00:54:18]. "What do you mean a young woman?" he says, "Yeah, I want her to be like I don't know like 20 years younger than me." And I was like oh God he's already [inaudible]. So [inaudible] or do you want to get a young woman man please? He said, "Well, what I'm going to do is I'm going to change the way I dress," [laughing] and then he went out and bought her all these new clothes and I'm like oh my God. [Inaudible 54:50] flipping out. Marriage and the money but you know

he started to change his look and he got [inaudible 00:54:58] [laughing] and then he started going out to places he wasn't going out before, kind of spiritual [inaudible 00:55:10] and he started going out to places [inaudible] places that may not have been church related [laughing]. So here is this old man in [inaudible] house who grieved all this pain, crying over his [inaudible] now he has what? He has a vision then he starts to hook up with the goals and he is executing them and then you know how the story ends. I [inaudible 00:55:33] I could not believe it. He met somebody 20 years younger and she ain't just anybody, she's like a fine woman, I'll show you a picture afterwards, I've got it right now. She's a fine woman, a lady of class and style, a socialite that has parties and [inaudible 00:55:49] she's really into him! [Laughing]. [Inaudible] but this is the man's vision! [Laughing]. [Inaudible] and he has a vision and he's set to go and she really digs him! I mean like this is so stupid! So what is happening? [Inaudible 00:56:10] but my dad, he's [inaudible] but we don't believe in all that [inaudible] his vision was not to just get a woman but to get married again so I had to really hose that down when he said, "Married, what do you mean? Fifty-two years not with nobody but my momma." [Inaudible 00:56:28] he wanted to be married he just didn't want to be with a woman, he wanted [inaudible] and so this woman, he asked her to marry him. [Inaudible 00:56:36] marry her. Well, you know [inaudible] and I still can't believe it and I'm [inaudible] [laughing]. And I'm like what! Oh, my God. [Inaudible] this about how his marriage is going to be but yes she'll marry him and she actually does it. [Inaudible 00:53:53] big wedding and here we are three years later and he has a whole new life of wholeness. No more of the crying...his social life is better than mine [inaudible] [laughing]...pain, what I wanted was to be free from his annoying [inaudible] I wanted to be free from him [inaudible] so this is cool. So [inaudible 00:57:19] I had to work late, but my vision for our relationship was to be peacefully, where he could be free, where I wasn't the babysitter anymore, I wanted to be free and so by her coming, she helps me out [laughing] and three years later, I still pay part of their bills but I'm free. [Inaudible 00:57:40] end his pain, he had the vision, he had the goals and then he put the...my brother he just said it...he just didn't have a vision but he put his faith to work. He believed in it so he changed his clothes, starting going out, I don't know what he said to that woman that first [laughing] [inaudible 00:58:04] anyway so then he got to his vision. Somebody said well does all this have to do with God? And I know you are probably saying that too. It's our [inaudible 00:58:11] that your vision, it comes from your soul and when you're that clear, [inaudible] something about, he said, "What do you want?" When you're that clear with what you want and then you presented that to God, God began to hear what you're saying. It's that clear. And it's my theory that his vision [inaudible 00:58:32] I was like [inaudible] kind like when a little kid comes to a [inaudible], "Daddy, daddy, I want that [inaudible]." [Inaudible]. "I want that new bicycle, I want it for my birthday! I know you can get it for me. Come on Dad." When you have that kind of faith and you believe it's going to happen, [inaudible] God and this is what he has for me [inaudible] you because you are so clear with what you want and because [inaudible 00:58:56] want, but then you're walking by faith when you do it. God begins to hear and that's [inaudible] crying out. I don't know, they probably had all kinds of cries [inaudible] free from this, let it be a place where we can [inaudible] when you're that clear, I think they were crying out but I also believe they had visions. I also believe that they had goals and God heard all of that and they [inaudible] in their journals or whatever and then God heard it and then he delivered them and they acknowledged your vision. [Inaudible] say but that's [inaudible 00:59:38] and you might have said well this is what I want you [inaudible] more to this in our next [inaudible]. It is for you and I don't know what your pain is, I really don't know all of what you're going through and I don't know if it's

still affecting you...the thing about visions are [inaudible] I learned this from my dad [inaudible 00:59:57] blessed me because now he is 82 and now he wants to open a limousine company, really? [Laughing] and he's going to be the primary driver [laughing]! But we want you [inaudible] is we are going to e-mail these to you, what is your [inaudible], you know you wrote down your pain but we don't want to leave you there and one thing...that's where I was going...it doesn't matter you can establish one vision like one of my visions for me I want was to be here at Mt. Zion and provide these kind of [inaudible 01:00:33] that was one vision but then we need to [inaudible] language and you've done that and God brings [inaudible] give you a new vision, you can keep growing no matter what age you're at or what you are going through, God brings you [inaudible] one to the next, to the next and it keeps getting higher and higher but you got to dig deep inside and say what is my vision. So we want you to consider that, we are going to e-mail it you and then if you see here it talks about what your goals are, so you are just not saying, oh I'm a divorced woman, I'll never find anybody, well, what is your vision [inaudible 01:01:05] how you are going to do that then there are short-term goals, but the short-term goals it's like [inaudible] increase her physical energy levels and I said, "Well how are you going to do that?" and she says, "Swimming lessons, dance lessons." So we [inaudible]. We are going to go over the next part when we get together because whenever you have a vision, and whenever you have...because you are trying to get out of [inaudible 01:01:28] talking about them next year, I don't want to be in the [inaudible] I told [inaudible]. Because she was going, "I don't want to hear about next year," I know [inaudible] [laughing]. I mean it's okay to go through stuff and be [inaudible] it's normal [inaudible] but you don't want to stay there so yes you were there but what is your vision now and how are you going to get there. Whenever you have a vision and whenever you have goals, I believe we're going to talk about that next week then it's going to be adversity that comes your way and we'll pick up on that in our next lesson. And I swing it back over to you...

SPEAKER 1: [Inaudible 01:02:05]. So you wanted us to write down our vision, is that correct [inaudible]?

SPEAKER 2: This is for your own personal, you know, this is not part, [inaudible 01:02:17] this is for you.

SPEAKER 1: Okay, but now what I'm asking [inaudible] is the vision that we are to consider, deal with connecting to the pain [inaudible] kind of vision or does the vision totally unrelated to the pain?

SPEAKER 2:

Well, we got to get on the pain so what is that next place that you want in your life? Maybe it's not really connected...one of the things [inaudible 01:02:49] pain is when you do something new [inaudible] or something. So yeah, I lost a loved one but I want my [inaudible] so my vision to acquire a [inaudible] so I start going back to school. I may not have as much time for my pain because I'm dealing with my future. Y'all know what my favorite text is, [inaudible 01:03:09] high calling, you know all the things...I can't forget what I went through because there's always something that is going to remind me of my momma and it will be a holiday or mother's day [inaudible 01:03:20] something that reminded but [inaudible] she presses forward. He has a goal

that he's going out there and when you press forward, the pain might still be there but it doesn't affect you as much because you are putting your energy on the next move that God has for you in your life. So what is that for you? It's not for us, it's just for your own, what is that vision? That next stage that you have.

SPEAKER 1: Write the vision down. What questions do you have? [Inaudible 01:03:57].

FEMALE: I want to ask [inaudible] question, he said you don't want to hear about [inaudible] and I think I know what you mean but I'd like to ask is in relation to that, can your pain lead to joy? And even though there was so much pain at one time and this is where I have come because I had so much pain and so now I'm in the joy of the [inaudible 01:04:24] and being in the joy of [inaudible] it powered me back to the pain so when I'm talking to you about where I know he had brought me from, it's joy now but I have to tell you about where I was first.

SPEAKER 1: [Inaudible] testimony, it's not that you [inaudible].

FEMALE: It's not extensive now but it's [inaudible 01:04:49].

SPEAKER 2:

[Inaudible] Star Trek, I'm not one of those fans but I did see one episode and they were taking these [inaudible] which I'll try to get you one [laughing] and if you take these pills, [inaudible] get your pain. [Inaudible] [laughing]. Pain is a part of my life, [inaudible]. And I really do, I like to cry. For Mother's Day, I like that. It makes me feel good, but I like to be [inaudible 01:05:28] fulfillment, I like to reflect. It just [inaudible] I like to reflect but you don't want to get stuck there and you don't stay there [inaudible] do what?

SPEAKER 1:

Cry out. [Inaudible] scripture down, [inaudible] verse 1-3, "[Inaudible] because he has anointed me to preach good [inaudible] he has sent me to [inaudible] broken-hearted [inaudible] them that are bound. The [inaudible 01:06:10] of the Lord [inaudible] God. You conquered all [inaudible] to a point unto them that mourn [inaudible] spirit of [inaudible] that they might be called trees of [inaudible] Lord that he might be glorified." In other words, God is saying I want to make the mutual change [inaudible] whatever that's weighting you down, whatever that energy [inaudible] God said I have an exchange for it so what I need you to do is [inaudible] if you give it to me [inaudible] then I will turn around and I'll give you something else in return. In other words, don't you want leave that pain [inaudible] do you want to keep on doing the same thing or do you want to move to the next [inaudible 01:07:01].

FEMALE: [Inaudible] want to move to the next level but the pain does have to be acknowledged in order to go forward. You can't [inaudible] misunderstood you know because I can hear some bitterness and I can

hear, he just wants to be acknowledged once that pain is acknowledged, I think that he can go forward.

SPEAKER 2: [Inaudible] I hear what you're saying. So we want [inaudible].

FEMALE: [Inaudible] I mean others. I mean we are aware of it because we have experience I guess, but don't just tell me [inaudible].

SPEAKER 2: You want to process your pain.

FEMALE: [Inaudible 01:07:51] action, a revolution at this point in your life.

SPEAKER 2:

We're saying that you've been in this state for awhile and now you realize that I want something new. Now the reason I like to be around people who are pain because they [inaudible] and you can get the life lessons. So you want to process your pain. Why do I feel this way? What do I really want? Whatever. You have to process it; when you process it that can then lead you to your vision, but if you just allow yourself just to have that pain, then you can remain stuck. So part of the crying out is you dealt with it, you talked about it, you acknowledged it and you know what happened that caused this pain and now you're saying, this is what I want, I want deliverance [inaudible] cry out.

FEMALE: But it's difficult to self-actualize at that point because I guess you've been oppressed or [inaudible 01:08:45] for so long, it's hard to actually imagine and yeah, you do have to get to that doggone breaking point and it's like [inaudible].

SPEAKER 2:

Your vision [laughing] [inaudible] that's why you want to have goals and when you have goals then you have some target [inaudible] trusting other men. You know we wanted that to be done within the first three months so when she wasn't moving on and that's why I knew I had to make a move too. So [inaudible] three months, we wanted her to be in a place where she was going to be able to trust more. [Inaudible] why do you [inaudible] because really if you [inaudible] and you have pain and if you don't have [inaudible] and there's more to [inaudible] I'm not doing it. You'll come up with excuses, well I don't have the money or it's too dark or whatever and so you have the goals but you also have to have a date and then you have to have somebody you're accountable too so you're just not like my dad who is accountable to me so I kind of pushed him on. He came up with goals [inaudible 01:09:48], "But you said you are going to go out more, why are you still looking at me?" You know, go out. So [inaudible] keeps you [inaudible] I believe [inaudible] if you are going through a traumatic experience, you could wind up like I said in that chart, the pain was there for a long time that's why he had to have the goals and the [inaudible].

FEMALE: Let me say one thing, because [inaudible 01:10:12] pain [inaudible] there is some pain that you can go through by yourself [inaudible] but there is some pain that's going to take therapy and so you can talk about vision and talk about goals, but you got to determine if the pain that I'm in right now, can I move through this by myself with God or do I have to have someone come in like a therapist or something and really get down with [inaudible] going on.

SPEAKER 2: That's right, you may need a third party. What does a third party do like me [inaudible] dollars an hour?

FEMALE: [Inaudible].

SPEAKER 2:

[Inaudible] we're trying to give you techniques of good therapists. We're trying to give you techniques that you can use, teacher techniques to process your emotions to identify what you want, but [inaudible] otherwise it will just keep coming back so you are not really helping a person if you are helping [inaudible]. So you give them the tools and part of the reason why I can do it is because I got the tools and then it's how I use them. So counseling can help you [inaudible]. You sit and process all that [inaudible]...

FEMALE: I was trying to say a process but...

SPEAKER 2: Gives you a technique, so maybe so the next time you will go through a painful, because you are going to go through another one, hopefully you've gotten the techniques someday [inaudible] and you may not need the third party at that point.

FEMALE: When you talk about your pain and I agree with [inaudible 01:11:38], it's two ways when they talk about. You can talk about it in a negative meaning that it's still affecting you but when you start talking about in a positive, she means that maybe we've overcome that and now can look at it [inaudible] as a learning tool [inaudible] others to come along and encourage them. I look at it as a double-edged sword; it could be negative meaning you are still processing, you haven't gotten over it and then the positive is that you have overcome that, this is my testimony. I have to talk about that [inaudible] because he can't talk about the testimony without telling me what happened before to get him to that point so I agree with that. So you have to talk about it but [inaudible].

SPEAKER 2: Then you can't [inaudible 01:12:24] [laughing].

SPEAKER 1: If I can just say what [inaudible] and this is just general, sometimes you come to [inaudible] people man, and every time you talk to them, they start talking about that...



FEMALE: But that's a negative...

SPEAKER 1: That's a negative [inaudible 01:12:47] difference between a wound and a scar. Sometimes you know...

FEMALE: It's still fresh. That's [inaudible] cry out...

SPEAKER 2:

I think all of us have things you've been delivered from but all of us have some other pain you know and only you know what those are and it still affects you and that's what we are talking about, what is that thing. Maybe you get your [inaudible 01:13:13] death of a loved one, done this but what is that thing that still bothers you [inaudible].

MALE: [Inaudible] these folks are saying, I don't think I want [inaudible] [laughing].

SPEAKER 2: Well, you can never forget because there is always a day [inaudible] [laughing]. No longer the director and I [inaudible].

SPEAKER 1:

Couple things then we will close up in prayer. A lot of it depends on who's carrying you, take inventory of your friends. Some friends will take you to a place and drop you off at the [inaudible 01:14:01] do is beg for [inaudible], then there are some friends who will actually take you to the [inaudible] presence of God. Sometimes you have to have people around you who can believe in your deliverance [inaudible] until you get to the point that you can believe for yourself but at the same time, [inaudible] for others to acknowledge what you went through. In other words, you don't want to give that much power, that much [inaudible 01:14:36] never do it. [Inaudible] power and therapy is the Lord Jesus Christ. I hope this has been beneficial and we need you to come back [inaudible] [laughing] on the 19th of May at the same time, 11 o'clock. Do you make sure that you take your [inaudible] and do that as your homework and bring it back to us the next time and bring your writing, make sure that you are writing about yourself and not somebody you know. Again, I thank you very much for coming.

MALE: [Closing prayer].

## SERMON I

### IT'S ABOUT TO GET BETTER

DR. LEONARD N. SMITH

MAY 6, 2012

It's one of the stories that I like most in the bible, but there is some relevance in this story today that I wish to suggest you that illuminates from this familiar text. Mark chapter 5, verses 25-29 in the New King James version it says, "Now a certain woman had a flow of blood for 12 years and had suffered many things from many physicians. She had spent all that she had and was no better but rather grew worse. When she heard about Jesus, she came behind him in the crowd and touched his garment for she said, 'if only I may touch his clothes, I shall be made well.'" That's as far as we read, may God bless us for the word of the Lord is already blessed.

Please understand that while I'm sharing with you today I'll be bouncing between this and the King James Version of this scripture because there are a couple of words in that King James Version that is not in this particular version that's applicable to the message today. I want to first of all, just take you as we begin to ease into this message. I want to take you to a person that I know that I love and respect an awful lot. His name is the Reverend Arthur Gault and the Reverend Arthur Gault is a preacher who has been at Mt. Zion who's shared with the men's ministry on a couple of occasions. He has even been a part of our last church-wide retreat. He is absolutely one of the kindest, gentlest men I have ever met in my entire life. He has my utmost respect. He is quite a guy and if you ever sit and talk with him you will find out that he is a man of wisdom. You can be a Christian and not be so wise but he is a Christian and he's wise at the same time. One day I saw him after him having been sick for a length of time and when I saw him I asked him, how he was. He replied to me, "I'm about to get better." Please understand that when he said that to me it kind of startled me, kind of threw me off because I was really trying to get a welfare check as to how he was doing at this particular time but he decided to tell me how he was going to be in the future. I didn't care about the future; I was dealing with what was going on right now. And so I asked him, "How are you doing? How are you feeling? How are you getting along?" and he told me, now listen to this, he said to me, "I'm about to get better." Now the thing that I struggled with was I wanted to know how he was doing in the present but he gave me a picture of his future and when he gave me the picture of his future, the picture of the future did not satisfy me because I was more concerned about his present than I was about his future. I didn't ask him about his past because I wasn't concerned about that. I knew that God had been good to him and he had been strengthened and that he had grown stronger, but I was concerned about how he was doing at that very moment. Please understand I was genuine, not like some of you. Some of you ask questions just because you want to be nosy, but I was genuinely concerned about how he was. He gave me this answer which at first I thought perhaps he was being a little smart by saying that I'm about to be better but then I began to think about it. When we are Christians and when we are believers, we have to understand that our lives are not really about what's happened in the past, it's really not even about what's happening in the present, what it is really all about, what our life, our Christian life is really all about, it's about what's going to happen. In case you don't believe it, all you have to do is read the bible and you'll discover that the bible is more about the future than it is about the past. I mean it gives us

some past events but the bible talks about, God talks about, Jesus talks about the future more than talking about the past. Now many of us in here are history buffs and we're concerned about what happened yesterday. In fact, some of us are stuck in what happened yesterday. The reality is it's not about what happened yesterday, not about what's happening right now, it's really about your future. Do me a favor, tell your neighbor, it's about your future [congregation talking]. And because it's about your future and he said to me, "I'm about to be better" he noticed on my face that I was rather puzzled because I'm not asking you about what you're going to be, I'm asking you about how are you right now and he looked at me so he decided to explain this thing to me. He said to me, "Let me help you understand" he said, "Before I can get well, I first have to go by better." Think about it. Before I can get well, I first have to go by better. So I'm about to be better, I'm not well, but I'm about to be better and I'm glad to be better because being better means I'm on my way to being well. I thought about that thing and that was powerful. He said, "I'm about to be better." And when I thought about that, this text is what came to mind. It came to mind because in verse 27 when we encounter this woman, it says that "When this woman heard about Jesus" when it gets down here to verse 28 it says, "For she said, 'If only I may touch his clothes I shall be made well.'" And when I thought about that, you know what that girl was saying? She was saying I'm about to get better. And the reality is, she wasn't well yet but she knew things were about to change and I came to tell you today that this can also be your declaration, that you too are about to get better.

Now, in order to get better, a couple of things have to happen and I want to share those things with you but before I do, let me just tell you that this is a picture of a hurting woman. It's a woman who's in pain, but then again it's not the first hurting person we've ever encountered before, in fact everywhere I go there are always hurting people. I mean I seem to be a magnet for hurting people. Now please understand before you think I'm complaining, I'm not complaining about that, I'm not bothered by that. I think God lets me be as strong as I am so that I can help other people. So I'm not mad at that but it just seems like I'm a magnet for hurting people. I mean, my friends when they hurt they call me. My friends tell their friends when they're hurting to call me. My friends tell people that they don't even know to call me because they are hurting. I'm a magnet for hurting people. I can be in the store and somebody in the store will walk up to me and just start telling me all of their business. I don't have a collar on, I don't have a cross around my neck and I don't have a bible under my arm. I got jeans and a sweatshirt and tennis shoes and they will just walk up to me and just tell me all about their troubles, their struggles, their pain and their hurt. I seem to be a magnet for hurting people. The only problem with being a magnet for hurting people is sometimes when you're a magnet for hurting people and some of you are perhaps a magnet for hurting people too, is that sometimes something called transference takes place. And when that takes place, that means the person who is hurting sees you in the light that they ought not see you and so what they begin to do is they start liking you or loving you and they believe that you're helping them is really a sign of your love for them when you really just love people but they think that you're intimately in love with them [applause]. Now that's a problem that happens when you're a magnet for hurting people. I just thought I'd put my business out there.

Listen, the reality is this brothers and sisters, that people hurt and wherever you go you will find hurting people and if that's true, I don't care where I go, they're people who are hurting and if that's true, it is true, I mean anywhere... I mean you'll have hurting people at work, they're at school, they're at CVS and at the ABC store, they're at Safeway, they're at Sears, they're at K-Mart, they're at KFC, they're in Macy's and Morton's, they're at Ruth's Chris and Red Lobster,

they're in Lerner's, they're in the Legal Sea Foods, they're in the malls, they're in the museums, they're at concerts, they're in craft shows, wherever you go, you are going to find hurting people and if that is true, they are literally everywhere. Please understand that when you come to church, that you are in the presence of hurting people. Wherever you go to church, I don't care...in fact, I would dare say that you'll find more hurting people in church than you'll find in any other single place. That's because we know to come to church when we are hurting; people who appear to be normal at first glance, but they're really slowly dying on the inside controlled by some unforeseen or unseen circumstance or condition. They're entangled webs often woven by their own hand, directed by some force of darkness that dictates and determines their thoughts and their actions. These hurting people, they come in two classes. Some are willingly haunted by horrible pain; that's about their present, while others are unwilling victimized by a horrible past. That's what happened a long time ago. Listen, hurting people are everywhere and yes the world is full of hurting people. Yes, the church is full of hurting people. Week after week, Sunday after Sunday, countless hurting, injured, abused, dysfunctional individuals come to church. They're not here simply because they are hurting, and I wanted you to get that understood. They didn't show up just because they are hurting and don't look at the person strange next to you because they might be one of these people because the reality is you might be one too. You didn't come just because you are hurting, you came because you are looking for relief, release and restoration. I'm not just here because I'm hurting. I'm here because I'm looking for something to replace my hurt based upon my own personal experience. I've come to know that anyone can hurt. A preacher, a priest, a pastor, a deacon, a deaconess, a disciple, a member, a ministry leader, a minister, it doesn't matter. All of us can hurt. Anyone and everyone possesses the potential to become the victim of some unforeseen force that can invade their lives, devastate and control it to an extent that they can appear alive on the outside but be quite dead on the inside. When you come to church hurting, you almost feel like you've experienced a spiritual and emotional invasion. The vision of your life becomes blurred, your joy is jilted and your normal demeanor becomes devastating. Even though you come to church in this condition, you have to be extremely careful with whom you come in contact with because please understand that even though you're hurting, everybody does not understand your hurt. Not everybody understands your pain. Not everybody understands what you are going through and I came to tell you, not everybody cares about what you're going through. Not even in church. Not everybody cares. No, no, no, no, no, no, no, no and that's why you have to be careful who you talk to because you talk to the wrong person you'll feel worse than you did before you came in. That's why you got to even be careful who you're sitting next to because sitting next to....you know how sometimes you sitting next to people and they talk all through the whole service. I'm hurting and I came for the word and you're going to talk through the whole service. I didn't come to here what you got to say. I came to hear what God's going to preach, Leonard, you just made somebody mad. But I ain't mad at you. Listen, the reality is you've got to be careful. See not everyone who asks you how you're doing is genuinely concerned about your welfare. Some people are more concerned about your business than they are about you. Some people are more interested in knowing your problem than trying to help you solve your problem. Some people are more interested in gathering gossip than sharing the gospel with you in your time of struggle and pain. Yes, they're people in this church, in this crowd this morning who are plagued by a problem or a pain from their past that is undermining they're present posture and providing an obstacle to their potential. One of the worst things in the world there is is to be a

hostage to the pain of your past and there are people here today who are captured by a condition that has haunted them for years. Can I tell you today, you're about to get better?

When you look at this story...listen our story begins with a request of a man by the name of Jairus. Now this is interesting because I know you say you started with verse 25 but that's not where the story begins. When you really...the story begins with this supporter, this ruler, this patron of the synagogue who comes to Jesus seeking help for his daughter who is sick. While he's there trying to get Jesus to see about his daughter, then verses 25-34 pop up right in the middle with another story in the middle of this story. I mean after dealing with this situation, this unsolicited delay which is this woman, she is the unsolicited delay, the word came to Jesus that the daughter was dead and Jesus goes to deal with the daughter and you know the rest of the story; the daughter is raised from the dead. Well, the sick woman seems to be an interruption to Jesus and an inconvenience to Jairus. I mean, I'm sure that Mr. Jairus must have been waiting on pins and needles wanting this sick woman to get out of the way of Jesus so that Jesus could get to his daughter. Isn't it amazing how when you have a problem, you don't really care about nobody else's problem. I mean after all, his daughter was sick. I mean this is an old woman, she had this disease for 12 years, she's been alive long enough, I got a daughter 12 years old. She's got her whole future ahead of her. She may as well just get out of the way. Why doesn't Jesus just let her go on and die and just be in her condition and deal with my young daughter who is in need of mercy at this moment? We even see that while Jesus was dealing with this sick woman that the girl dies. It's amazing how sometimes you can talk to the Lord and the Lord knows your situation and he won't do anything for it and anything to it and the next thing you know, your situation gets worse and while it's getting worse for you, it's getting better for somebody else. The woman in the text wasn't the order of the day. She was not the leading role in this dramatic episode; however, Jesus took the time to meet her need as well. Isn't it good to know that we serve a Christ that even though he's on another mission, he'll make you a part of the mission. I mean this says to me that you don't have to be on the Lord's agenda to be blessed. He can bless you anywhere, anytime and anyhow. I'm not trying to diminish the significance of the sick woman, please understand that, her condition or her need for healing. I'm not suggesting that she is to be reduced to some mere byline or prevent disease in this superior story. Her story is just as important as the little girl's story; in fact, it's so important that the three Synoptic Gospel writers put this story in their writings. Some might call the woman's story a minor miracle but it was a major one to her. See that's why I don't deal with what people say about what God has done for me because what might not seem like much to you, it's a whole lot to me and if you were her you'd call it a major miracle as well. Let's walk through the text and let's see what we can see here and then I'm going to be done.

In verse 25, it shows us first of all the woman's dilemma; it's her dilemma. Look at what it says. It says, "Now a certain woman had a flow of blood for 12 years." The King James Version says, "An issue of blood." First you can't overlook the fact that this woman's name is not mentioned in this story. You don't see the woman's name. Anybody know what her name was? Well, please believe me she had a name but her name was not mentioned in this story. The only thing that's mentioned about this woman is her condition but not her name. She had been sick for 12 years with an abnormal bleeding condition. It was a utero flow, her blood wouldn't clot and her constant bleeding caused her to be weak, tired, frail and drained of her energy. This is an interesting thing. Look at the woman's dilemma. This woman is physically sick. She is physically challenged. We don't know her name but we know her condition. No man in this room can ever imagine what this woman was going through and few women in here can

authentically identify with what the woman was going through. All I know is it's no fun to be sick for one day. I know that it's not a good thing to be sick for a week. I know it's a terrible thing to be sick for a month. I also know it's a tragic thing to be sick for a year. But this woman has been sick for 12 years. I have no word to describe what it must be like. Look even closer at her dilemma. According to the law, the woman was untouchable. Somebody say untouchable. Cut off from the rest of society. She was an outcast. She couldn't marry or if she married, her condition was grounds for divorce. She couldn't go to the temple to worship; this woman was just a social outcast. According to Leviticus, anything and anybody that touched her would be considered unclean. If touched that person had to wash their clothes, take a bath and would be considered unclean until that evening. She infected everyone and anything she touched for 12 long years. She literally lived a life of isolation, devoid of the human touch. Can you imagine what it's like to live without the human touch? I mean no holding hands, no hug, no kiss, no embrace, no handshake, no pat on the back, no massage of the shoulders and no brief brush up against another human being even in the market place. Can you imagine what it was like not to have been touched by anybody? Let me carry on. Not only do we see her dilemma but we see in verse 26, we see also her devastation. I mean look at this thing. We see the woman's devastation. Listen to what verse 26 says, "And had suffered many things from many physicians, she had spent all that she had and was no better but rather grew worse." Let me spend a moment here and share with you something very interesting. I've come to the place where I understand that most of us would choose health over wealth any day, most of us. Not all of us but most of us would choose health over wealth any day because money can't buy you health. I mean it can buy you healthcare but it cannot buy you health. She has spent all that she had and was no better. The scripture says, "She got worse." Now listen to this. She had tried every doctor, every cure but all it did was make this woman sicker and poorer. Remember now, I told you that most of us would choose health over wealth. This woman has lost both health and wealth. Ancient Jewish writings suggest that there were 11 different cures for such bleeding as this woman was the victim of. Aside from some tonic and herbal remedies, one cure was for the infected to carry the ashes of an ostrich egg in a linen bag in the summer and a cotton bag in the winter. Another cure was said to have been to carry around a barley corn which was recovered from the dung of a white female donkey. One scholar lists common remedies of that day to include eating grasshopper eggs, carrying around the tooth of a fox and carrying around the fingernail of a person who had been hanged. Common remedies including cutting and burning the affected area. This woman sought every available cure and every available doctor. You can't make me believe she didn't go through some of that list that I just read to you. Whatever she did nothing worked and now she's not only sick but she is sicker and broke. It's horrible to try everything and get worse. I mean it's bad, it's bad. It's a bad thing to try everything and not get better but stay the way that you are. But can I tell you it's a horrible and a devastating thing when you try everything and instead of getting better, you get worse. I mean look at this, this woman she's tried it all. She's tried everything and nothing seemed to work but I came to tell somebody that if you're trying everything or you've tried everything and nothing worked, don't get mad, don't get upset, let me tell you what that really is. That is really God trying to help you to understand that you are a candidate for a miracle. See if you try something and it worked or everything was working in your favor or there was something that could take care of your situation, you don't need a miracle. But if you ever encounter something that medicine can't do anything with, nobody can help you, no remedy available, you are the candidate for a miracle. It sets you up for God to do the unusual. If this...we are always looking for God to do the unusual,

but you got to understand, you've got to have something unusual going on in your life if you really want God to do something unusual. See we want to see a miracle but we don't want no mess and I came to tell you that you can't ever have a miracle unless you first have some mess. So don't get mad at the mess you go through, just let somebody know that when I go through my mess it is God setting me up for a miracle.

We don't know her name but we know her issue. She was devastated. This woman's life was a mess. I mean listen...she has an issue as the King James Version says, "She has an issue." Somebody say an issue. And I want to help you with something. It says that she has an issue but I got to warn you of something, nobody has an issue. You know I knew y'all wouldn't like that see, y'all are trying to act like you got it all together and everything. You look like it but let me tell you, nobody has a singular issue. Nobody. Nobody! You're a liar! Nobody has a singular issue. And so when you look at this, the bible only gives us the woman's issue but there are sub-issues to the one issue that we're given privy to. Well, what do you mean by that pastor? Keep reading it's right there. I mean, from the issue you could see the underlying issues and you can surmise some of the other issues that the woman had. See don't think because you acknowledged an issue that it is an indication that that's all that you have. See nobody has just one. We all got some sub-issues. Let me prove my point in the text, "The woman had an issue of blood" but her issue created other issues for her. I mean her issue was physical but it caused and created other issues for the woman. What are you talking about pastor? It's right there. First of all, it created financial issues. She spent all her money. She was broke. And can I tell you sick is one thing but sick and broke is another thing. I mean listen, not only that, the woman has social issues. What do you mean by that? She was a social outcast, nobody wanted to be with her, nobody wanted to hang with her and nobody invited her to go out anywhere. Nobody invited her to go out for a picnic. The girls in the neighborhood didn't invite her to hang with them. Nobody dealt with her; she was a social outcast. That created another issue. But not only that, the woman has spiritual issues. And you said well what you mean she had spiritual issues? The woman couldn't go to church because the folk in the church considered her to be unclean and they didn't want nobody unclean in their church. God knows I wish I had been the pastor of that church. Because I'd tell them, "You don't want nobody unclean in your church, well all of y'all better get out of here because everybody in here is a little unclean." And I want you to understand that you're sitting next to an unclean person. I mean you're an unclean person. The preacher is an unclean person. Let me tell you something, the bible says all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. She had other issues, but she's about to get better. And let me show you because I need you to understand if you're going to be better than here are some things that need to happen. There are three things I want to leave you then I'm sitting down. The first thing we see here, we see the woman's desperation and I came to tell you if you're going to be better, you better be desperate. Listen, in verse 27, it says, "When she heard about Jesus, she came behind him in the crowd and touched his garment." Now can I tell you when you are desperate you will try anything. See we see this in verse 26 but then we see it again in verse 27. I mean in verse 26, it says she tried everything. But then in verse 27, it shows that she is trying the last thing she knows how to try. See desperation not only made her to subject herself to the ridiculous as she did in verse 26, but it also made her subject herself to the righteous one in verse 27. See let me tell you, desperation is desperation and I don't care what it takes for you to come to Christ. Whether you came because you heard about him, whether you came because you're desperate, whether you came because you're sick, it really doesn't matter why you come just as long as you come. This woman was desperate and out of her desperation she deals with Jesus. Desperation



made her do what she did. Listen at what the text says, it says, "She heard about Jesus." I mean she didn't have any evidence she just got a rumor about Jesus. And I thought about that for a moment; I started wondering what in the world had she heard. I still don't know what the woman heard. All I know is Romans 10-17 came to my mind. It says, "That faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God." So when this woman heard about Jesus, somehow she knew I'm about to get better. She heard about him. She was desperate and had no hope prior to coming into this encounter for Jesus but here now all of a sudden, this woman says, "This is my last hope. This is my only hope." This woman turns to Jesus, and let me just parenthetically mention here, that her condition was there before she encountered Jesus. Now watch this. Her condition, she was messed up before she encountered Jesus. Now the reason I like this part and I had to mention this to you is because I needed y'all to know something that some of y'all don't know. And that is this, that your condition may predate your encounter with Jesus but that does not exclude you from the mercy of Jesus. Let me say that again. That your condition may predate your encounter with Jesus but it does not exclude you from the mercy of Jesus. I can tell y'all didn't understand that, let me break it down for you. All I'm trying to tell you is this. Is that with the Lord there is no condition that is outside of the reach of his mercy. What I'm trying to tell you...let me break it down with something more than that. I got to help somebody because somebody ain't getting this. Listen, in other words what I'm trying to say is that the Lord that we serve is not only the Lord over what's going on now, but he's also the Lord over your preexisting conditions. Now I can tell some of y'all still ain't getting this. Now, so let me break it down like this. Some years ago I had a fender-bender and when I had this fender-bender somebody ran into the back of me and they ran in the back of one side of my car and I went and took my car to their insurance adjuster. That's what I did Debra, I took it to their insurance adjuster and when I went to their insurance adjuster, that was the insurance company of the person who had hit me in the back, I went there and the guy got my car, started looking around the car, looked at the damage, and said, "You got hit over here, right?" and I said, "Yes sir that's right." He looked over on the other side of the bumper and there was a mark on the other side of the bumper, "He said did that happen in this accident?" and I said, "No sir that was not part of this accident, that happened before." He said, "Okay." He started writing, going through, doing his thing and I'm watching him. In my mind I'm saying, why are you asking me about that? You know, somebody else did that. In fact, I did that one. So, he was there, he was writing up everything and I was just sitting there waiting for him to come back and tell me what was going on and everything and finally he gave me my assessment. And when I looked at the assessment he said, "All right, this is what we're going to do, this is how much damage it is" blah, blah, blah, blah, blah and he said, "I'm going to take care of the whole bumper." And I looked at the man and I said, "Wait a minute. How in the world are you going to take care of my bumper on a car that you don't insure? This is my car? This ain't my company. This is the man that hit me, his company." He said, "Sir, I understand that and I know that" and he looked me in the eye and he said, "Reverend" he said, "Mercy covers preexisting conditions." Listen, I came to tell you something today that that's what I want you to understand about God is that whenever you meet him, his mercy covers preexisting conditions. I mean whatever happened before; he is able to cover you. He is able to take care of you. He is able to fix it up. Well, needless to say I shut my mouth and went about my business.

Thank God this woman was desperate enough to try Jesus. Let me rush on here, I have more to tell you but I can't. Let me go...not only if you go get better and know that you're about to be better, not only must you have desperation but the second thing you got to have is a



declaration. I mean look at what it says here in verse number 28, "For she said" this is a declaration, "If I only may touch his clothes, I shall be made well." This is a declaration of faith but I want you to understand that faith isn't the woman's main problem. In fact faith ain't a problem for the woman at all. And I know you're probably saying well pastor how can you say that faith is not a problem for the woman. Listen, faith is not a problem for the woman. The woman already has faith. I'm convinced of that. And I know you are saying pastor there you go making up stuff, you bible scholars are sitting there talking about there ain't nothing in there about that. Oh yes it is, it's right there. The woman's problem is not a faith problem. Let me break it down for you. See everyone in here in this room has faith. I mean I don't care who you are, everybody has faith. How can you say that? You don't know who's sitting up in here. You don't know whether it was some unsaved person in here. You don't have to be saved in order to have faith. I need y'all to understand that because some of y'all think that only folk who are saved got faith. No everybody got some faith. I mean atheists got faith, agnostics got faith. What do you mean by that preacher? I'm glad you asked me. Let me prove to you everybody in here has faith because when you came in here today you sat down in that chair. If you did not test it before you sat down, you had faith that that chair was going to hold you up. Come on y'all get real. You had faith in the chair. You believed, that's faith. You didn't even try it to see if that chair was going to hold you up. When you got in your car today you stuck the key in the engine. You had faith. You didn't open up the hood to make sure everything was in order under the hood. You had faith that your car was going to start today. When you put on your clothes you had faith that you were going to make it to worship today. See the woman's problem was not faith; the woman did not have a faith problem because anybody can have faith. The problem that the woman had was she had faith in the wrong thing. How can you say she had faith in the wrong thing? She had faith in the doctors, faith in the cures and everything she had faith in did not work. But things are about to get better for this sister. Because the reality is because she was desperate and we see her desperation, she made a declaration that no longer do I have a faith problem. I mean for 12 years she had faith in doctors and they fail her but now she makes Jesus the object of her faith and when you listen to her declaration, you might be tempted that the woman had more faith in the clothes than she had in the man. But I need you to understand, this is not a declaration of faith in clothes. This is a declaration of faith in a man. Listen, I know you are probably saying well what do you mean? Listen to what it says, "If only I may touch his clothes I shall be made well." It sounds like she's got faith in the clothes and not in the man but I came to tell you, she doesn't have faith in the clothes, she has so much faith in the man. She said, "If I can just tickle the tassel on the bottom of his robe, I know that that man's got enough power in him that all I got to do...preach on Leonard Smith, that all I got to do is just touch his clothes and I shall be made well. Can I tell you that if it's going to get better for you, not only must you be desperate, but you also got to make a declaration? You got to be able to say anyway the Lord blesses me, then I will be satisfied. I believe that he is able to do exceedingly and abundantly more than I could ever think or ask because I came to tell you that if you're desperate and you make a declaration, it brings me to the third thing and then I'm done. I declare you will get your deliverance. Look right there in verse number 25, "Immediately the fountain of her blood was dried up and she felt in her body that she was healed of the affliction." Listen, the text says "Immediately". Somebody say immediately. That means quicker than already and faster than soon. I mean before she could get the job finished, before she could be ended with her journey the bible says immediately. Somebody shout immediately. This woman was healed. I mean this woman got healed by touching the clothes of Jesus. I mean here she is. She's healed

by a touch but she didn't touch him, she just touched his clothes. In other words 12 years of torment, 12 years of pain and 12 years of agony instantly disappeared when that woman reached out and touched our God. Listen, I came to tell you today that your deliverance ain't going to take a long time. Some of y'all think it's going to take years for God to bring you out, but I came to tell you if you can reach out and touch him, quicker than already and faster than soon, he'll stop your blood flow, he'll stop your agony, he'll stop your suffering and he'll stop your pain. He'll stop your hurt. He'll stop your dilemma. Is there anybody here who knows that if you can reach out and touch him, he'll make everything all right? Somebody say I'm about to get better. I'm desperate enough to get better. I'm desperate enough to get better. I know that if I can just make a declaration then I will get my deliverance. I won't give up! I won't throw in the towel! I won't say it's all over! I won't declare myself a victim. I will not give in! I will not throw up my hands! I am about to get better! Somebody say I'm about to get better! I'm about...to get better. And when you're about to get better, you got to believe it before you see it. Things are about to change. Things are about to go my way. What was will not be what will be. What was in the past is just that, in the past [applause]. It's in the past.

Let me tell you something, when you walk around with stuff from the past, you hurt yourself more than you hurt anybody else because the person that you hold it against, they're smiling and you're frowning. You're looking bad and sad and they're just as happy as they can be. Happy go lucky. And if you are going to be a real Christian, then you got to learn how to release people from the past even if you understand releasing ain't for them. Releasing is for you. Some stuff you just got to...somebody said let it go. Sometimes that's what you got to do. You know sometimes our greatest dilemmas are not because of something that's being directly done to us. Sometimes it is because we have left some things undone. And when we begin to move into that place and we can make that declaration as that woman did, I'm about to get better.

And so listen, why don't you bow your heads with me right where you are. Lord, we honor you today and I thank you for these persons who have come today. I thank you especially for those who have listened with an open heart and an open mind. I thank you for those who have not sat in judgement and in their minds trying to discover who they're going to share this word with. But I thank you for those who are saying to themselves, this was for me today. So Lord I pray that every dilemma that's faced by your people who would be confronted with desperation, that they will make a declaration and that you would give them their deliverance. God there is some stuff that we're in can't nobody get us out but you, and so Lord we ask you to do what you do and we will not honor you just because of, because Lord if you don't do anything we're still going to honor you. But if you bless us, you'll never have to work, you'll never have to look, you'll never have to search for a worshiper because we'll worship you out of a spirit of thanksgiving, in spirit and in truth. Bless us Lord in Jesus' name we pray and everybody said amen and amen.

## **APPENDIX C**

**WEEK THREE: JOURNAL II;  
SERMON II AND III; AND SESSION III AND IV**

## **Journal II**

### **What is the Lord telling you regarding your pain experience?**

#### **PARTICIPANT 1:**

In my first writing, I told about my pain being linked to my father's sudden death. At that time it seemed to me that God had it in for me, so I could not and did not want to hear anything about the pain that had destroyed my life. I now know that God was growing me. I refused to listen. I knew God was preparing me, but he also had to prove to me that He was who He said He was. God was directing my life. My mother always told me that I was bull headed, so I think God saw me the same way. God was speaking to me daily, telling me to trust Him. One night as I was sitting in my bed, God spoke to me and His words were, "I will take care of you, I will lead you." God was telling me to trust Him, but I'm not sure if I knew how or even wanted to trust God. God was speaking to my very soul, but I didn't listen. One day my mother and I were talking, all at once she started to singing "Yield Not to Temptation" – at that moment, I heard a voice so clear speaking to me – yield unto me and I will give you complete peace---God was assuring me that He would wipe away all my fears, my tears, and sadness and my pain. I just needed to trust him. I thank God every day for being patient with me. I have now learned to listen and obey Gods' word. God told me to take his hand, move forward and follow him. The pain I once had is now all joy, I now tell everybody about His love for us, His goodness, His peace and His everlasting love. Thank you God for speaking to me ....I owe my all to you.

#### **PARTICIPANT 2:**

No contribution made on this part of the process.

#### **PARTICIPANT 3:**

One thing that I have learned about God as I have gone through these painful experiences is that God talks you through the process and gives you comforting words as you start the healing process. With the abusive relationship, God had use this experience for me to minister to others. It's unbelievable how God can use our painful experiences to help other people who are going through the same thing. With the death of my grandmother, the Lord led me to seek out a therapist to help me deal with my grief. During the sessions, I learned a lot about myself and why I suppressed my feelings. With the help of therapy and the Lord I'm well on my way to wholeness again.

#### **PARTICIPANT 4:**

The death of my son occurred some twenty three years ago. My sense of things is that one never gets over such a tragic, devastating event. What is the Lord telling me regarding my pain experience? He's telling me what He told me after the event occurred. He directed me to begin doing for others in the church what the church had done for me during my heartbreak, which is

to begin serving and lifting up the spirits of others. I became a man with a whole new vision and goal for my life. My church rescued me, provided help and direction, and showed me what I ought to be doing for those in need. The church was overwhelmingly good to me and I feel obligated to give back, not for some designated amount of time, but for the rest of my life. I'm sold out for Christ, who, when I cried out, lifted me up and carried me through the trauma. I'll never forget. I'm better now, not necessarily well. I'm not sure that I want "well," if well means that I forgot the pain and along with it, my son. God told me to go to work, to do and He'd explain it all to me later. He told me in 1 Corinthians 13:12, "For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am know." I'll keep on working for the Kingdom and just wait on God.

#### **PARTICIPANT 5:**

To trust in Him and lean not to my own understanding. That there's value in the painful experience because it strengthen me to be a testimony and help those who may go through a similar experience for I can't teach and talk of that which I know not of. He is forever faithful and true to me and He will bring me out of it. He will not put anymore on me than He knows I can bear. In order for me to have a breakthrough I had to go through. It's taking me to the next level or step towards my spiritual maturity in growing in my faith in Him. Trials and tribulations will not destroy me. It's a process of life. When thrown into the fiery pit of a painful experience we come out better and stronger with a new lease on life. It has taken me higher level of faith and drawn me even closer to Him. I wouldn't say I've become immune to pain but it helps me to handle it better the next time it occurs for there will be a next time. When it comes I am better equipped and able to handle it spiritually so the emotional and mental aspect doesn't leave me dwelling on it. I am able to move on from it. I can look back on it and think of it as a step towards my spiritual growth. Through my painful experiences I became wiser because there is a lesson in the valley moments of life. I strive for and seek the positive in it rather than the negative even though it can be difficult while going through it, it can be done. Through the experience I can be a vessel through whom He speaks of the blessings He bestows daily. Therefore, I can be a conduit for Him.

#### **PARTICIPANT 6:**

The Lord has told me to come to Him. He is a father to the fatherless. He's my daddy now. Being raped at such a young age created an insecurity in me and I sometimes felt intimidation and manipulation and thought that people viewed me as a easy target. I am reading two books, "Beauty for Ashes" by Joyce Meyers and "Whatever Happened to Daddy's Little Girls by Jonetta Rose Barras. Which deals with the impact of fatherlessness on Black Women. Both of these books provided great insight into who I am and more importantly who's I am. I am not damaged goods, I am still worthy and I am still a daughter of the King. The hurt I and the anger I still feel is now being dealt with head on. I am walking back through my pain toward victory and salvation. These hurts caused me to make some not so good choices, both in men and behavior. Allowing myself to be controlled and emotionally bullied. Thanks be to God, truly brought women into my life that fear the Lord and walk in His ways. They showed me how to regain my voice, re-establish or demand respect (still working on this) and simply just to hold my hand or lend an ear. Nothing better than having your sisters in the midst interceding for one another. God

knows what we need, when we need it and where to get it. I am still walking this pain out but the difference now is that I'm not having to do it alone. I have my Savior on one side and my girls standing in the gap. I am not as anxious because I know He hears my prayers, sees my tears, hears' my cries, and understand my broken heart. God is a healer. He is walking me back through so I can see the pain, understand its root and break the yoke it has on me. I have prayed for Wisdom and insight. He answered and is still answering. I prayed for clarity and confirmation when something is placed on my heart. My experiences, albeit painful, helped to make me who I am so that I can be a walking testimony that we can overcome. I must simply believe and keep a faithful heart. Not as simple as it sounds but the Lord will provide the strength.

#### **PARTICIPANT 7:**

At least I know that God has kept and is keeping me through all of my pain. Someone is praying for me because there have been many times that I would have given up, but I made it through. At first I was going to say that I am reserved or have accepted my plight because I know I'm not exempt from the pains of life. I was losing hope and dared not pray for something better because some of my problems are so long term and there was no point in getting my hopes up only to be disappointed. It's a faith struggle for me. I felt if the only answers I was getting was no or wait then there was no need in praying. Besides you get so use to the pain you've been with for so long and the prospect looks so bleak then what's the point of getting your hopes up. It was so difficult for me to imagine the opposite of my current life. Then I realized the basis of my lack of faith is fear. It's the path of least resistance. Then are some things that I can do to make my life better. I just need to put together a plan and implement it. I actually have to visualize an optimum situation, felt positive energy, through the things I could do, realized what my hindrance were and decided to do something about the areas I can change.

#### **PARTICIPANT 8:**

The Lord is telling me that I am healed from my past pain. He is also telling me that the pain I suffered in the past was allowed by Him to help mold me into a stronger person. He has taught me to lean and depend totally and completely on Him. He is also telling me that more pain will come inevitably along with life experiences but as long as I am able to yield to Him and stay close to Him it would be short lived and less intense.

#### **PARTICIPANT 9:**

The Lord is telling me that my pain is normal and in time it will heal. He is also telling me that I'm not ready for a new relationship and what I'm feeling is good.

#### **PARTICIPANT 10:**

Do not be deceived, many false Christ would appear and draw away the disciples after themselves. Test every thought and doctrine against scripture to see if it contradicts, if it does not pass the test, then it should be rejected immediately. I should be noble minded and diligently search the scriptures to see whether the things being taught in the church are really so. When

brothers and sisters in the church say and do things to intentionally hurt me, I must realize they are imperfect people and that the enemy can and does use people in Leadership positions as a vehicle to serve his selfish deeds in an attempt to cause me to doubt and hinder my spiritual progress and growth. My physical pain has been since my back surgeries. Those issues haunt and kill my enjoyment of a normal life. I must remember Christ suffered in some way test whether we are in the faith. The Lord also telling me that my life in the world is temporary, short as if an alien of the land. The place He is preparing for me is eternal life in the Heavens.

#### **PARTICIPANT 11:**

I have learned over the years that my pain is an opportunity for me to learn what God has in store for me. However in most situations my challenge is to remember to turn to God during the purification process and get intimate with Him to determine His will much like Jesus in the Garden of Gethesame.

#### **PARTICIPANT 12:**

That I should focus because pain makes you lose focus. You feel troubled, perplexed, and persecuted, cast down. He taught me about the pressures of pain, being helpless. I have a brand new perspective to overlook the seen and unseen. I have to move on forward with life. Faith is the instrument available to help me see the invisible. Pain has taught me that there is none righteous, no not one and that being honest, truthful, kind, compassionate, loving, generous, unselfish, trying to keep the Ten Commandments and evening going to church will not get you into heaven.

#### **PARTICIPANT 13:**

From that painful experience, I dug deeper into my relationship with God. I prayed to God to help me to learn how to be more self-reliant. I had just come out of a relationship of dependence. I had a fear of how I was going to make it all by myself. I leaned on my boyfriend for many of my needs (car repairs and when I needed money he helped me out when he could) for me to go to my family for help or favors was rare. I believe at this point in my life the Lord was letting me know it was time for his sheep to come back into the fold. The disappointment I was feeling was real, was the Lord telling me to lean on him and revealing to me that family and friends can let you down regardless of your relationship with them, or how well they knew your heart, or intentions, or the things you have done for them. Realizing now, I needed the Lord in my life more now than ever before. I made up my mind, to get back to my roots by becoming a better steward and start attending church more. The Lord was letting me know, he had freed me from the bondage of a boyfriend and my mother (even though I never asked her for anything once I left home). He was letting me know in spite of my fears he would help me to get through this painful experience. My faith kicked in deeper and I through the Lord and the spirit within me pushed on ward one day at a time.

## SERMON II

### TRANSFORM PAIN INTO PRAISE

**DR. LEONARD N. SMITH**

Thank you for blessing us with life and liberty through Jesus Christ our Lord and now as we share together in your word, we pray for the illumination of the Holy Spirit. Speak Lord, your servants here; it's in Jesus' name we pray. Amen and amen. We've already read our verses of focus today which is found in Acts chapter 16 and for some of you that is a familiar text; that's Acts chapter 16, verses 16-26. I won't read them again for the sake of time but I do encourage you to read the entire chapter at your leisure so that you can see what these verses are really saying and the power that's contained therein.

I want to look here and I want to talk for a few moments from the thought and theme transforming pain into praise. Transforming pain into praise. Can you say that with me today? Transforming pain into praise (with the congregation). The story is told of a man by the name of Geraldo Spafford who was a wealthy Chicago attorney back in the late 1800s. He was extremely wealthy and after having suffered a number of tragedies in his family, it brought him to a different place and a different point in his life. His wife was an advent supporter of Dwight Moody who was a popular evangelist in that time who happened to be conducting revival on the continent of Europe. They made the decision that they would go and travel to Europe to be with Dwight Moody during their vacation. In doing that, making that decision to go and spend that time with Dwight Moody, it happened to be after something very tragic had happened a couple of years prior. In 1870, his 4-year-old son died from scarlet fever. Because of that tragedy in the family, they grew closer to God and prayed and continued in prayer. In 1871, he invested all of his money into property in Chicago, in the spring of that year. In October of that very same year was the fire, the Great Fire of Chicago that destroyed his property and his fortune. And preparing to go on this trip to France to share in this evangelist service with Dwight L. Moody, something, some matter of business came up and he decided to send his family before him and so his four daughters and wife got on the boat and headed over to Europe. He got a telegram from his wife while he was still there waiting and completing his business, which informed him that the ship had sank and only a few had survived. Of those who had survived, his wife survived. She sent him that telegram, the message, "saved alone."

In his pain and in his disappointment and despair, his wife returned and so they made the decision that they were going to go to Europe again and were going to visit. So some two years later, they decided to go and take that trip and journey to Europe and while they were journeying to Europe it is said that when the captain of the ship told him that he was in the area where his four daughters had drowned, he sat down and pinned the words to a popular hymn that many of us know. The words of that hymn said, "When peace like a river attend my way and sorrows like sea billows roll, whatever my lot though has taught me to say, it is well with my soul." When you think about this story of this man and his family, he wrote this song through tear-stained eyes. He pinned these powerful words to this great hymn of the church and from the ashes and the wreckage of his pain, this painful experience comes to us the sound of praise. Too many of us, our praise is born out of prosperity and not born out of adversity. For many of us we cannot praise in adversity, but we can only praise in prosperity. Thankful praise is not the same thing as



hopeful praise. There is a difference between the two. See thankful praise is birthed out of getting something but hopeful praise is birthed out of losing everything. Thankful praise is born out of being blessed with something but hopeful praise is born out of being broken by something. Thankful praise is predicated upon, based upon things happening but hopeful praise comes when nothing at all is happening. I think that it's critical that every believer, including you, come to the understanding of how to transform your pain into praise.

We see this process operable in the lives of Paul and Silas, watch this. Paul and Silas found themselves in an unanticipated and unsolicited season of pain. They were cast into prison and subjected to cruelty, torture and pain. In that very prison, they experienced an enormous abundance of the grace of God. Right in the midst of their problem, God provided what they needed to transform their pain into praise. Let's spend the next few moments now perusing these preachers pain in hopes of finding the means and the method that they used in order to bring about praise. The message won't be for everybody here today so I need you to know that because some of you will never praise your way through your pain. We'd rather have a pity party and invite people to come and bring gifts of sympathy. If that's you, this sermon ain't for you today. This is for the person who recognizes that pity ain't going to get you through your pain. But if you came today hurting and you want your pain to stop and you're not too pretty or proud to admit your pain, I came to crash your pity party and to tell you that you can praise your way through your pain by transforming your pain into praise.

Let's look at these three things in the text that I want to show you today, but let me introduce because first of all, you got to understand the origin of their pain and in order to understand the origin of their pain, you have to look at verses 16-24. You see when Paul and Silas arrived in Phillipi, they had tremendous expectations about what God was going to do and about what was going to happen for them. I know the text doesn't say it, but you know some things you can just kind of get when you read it and feel the sense of it. I mean, after all, the Lord had given them instructions to go to the city in verses 6-12. If the Lord sends you on a divine assignment, why wouldn't you expect great expectations. I mean look, we have grand expectations when we assign stuff to ourselves so if God assigns us to something, then we just ought to have great expectations. The Lord sent them to the city and their purpose for being in the city was validated by the conversion of Lydia and others when you read verses 13-15 yet and the place where God has sent them now becomes the place of their problems. Please understand, and let me help you to understand, that your painful place can sometimes be the place exactly where God sends you.

When you look at the context of verses 16-24, Paul and Silas were in the Lord's will doing the Lord's work and still have problems and pain. Their pain started with this, watch this now because there are three things that make them have this pain. Actually there are two things but let me break it down for you. There are two things, the first thing is this; selfish people were the cause of their pain. If you look here in verse number 19 this says, "But when her master saw that their hope of profit was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the market place to the authorities and they brought them to the magistrates and said, "These men being Jews exceedingly trouble our city and they teach customs which are not lawful to us being Romans to receive or observe."" You got to really understand the context here. There's a little girl running around there who has a demon inside of her that gives her a gift. Please understand, let me park there for a moment, because I want you to know that all of your gifts don't come from God, the devil can give you some too. And so she's operating in this gift of being able to foretell the future and then Paul and Silas encountered the girl, they deliver her from this demon

and she can no longer do what she used to do. And because of that selfish people became angry at what had taken place. Watch this. The apostolic duo of Paul and Silas were falsely accused by selfish people. How did they falsely accuse them? They said that these men are troubling the city and they are teaching customs that are not lawful for us to observe or to receive. This is a lie, it ain't true. They are not teaching anything, all they are doing is telling the truth and delivering somebody from their calamity. I mean watch this, when you read the text, it's really easy.

The only thing that they are guilty of is cutting off the money source of the evil men who exploited the gifts of the little girl. They could care less about the demon-tormented little girl. They cared about making a living. See their selfish desires meant more to them than the little girl. Many times, think about it, we wonder how people can do some of the things that they do; well I came to tell you that selfishness will make you do a whole lot of things. I mean think about it. If your name is Jerry Sandusky, I want you to understand the thing that makes you do what you do is selfishness because selfishness makes you do what you do and makes you only consider what you want and what you desire. So in order to satisfy your own lustful desires, you will do whatever you want to do.

It doesn't matter who you hurt in the process. It doesn't matter whose life you destroy in the process, selfishness will make you hurt somebody else, destroy their character, jeopardize their future, ruin their reputation and even ruin their livelihood, all because you selfishly want what you want for yourself. I want you to understand that selfishness is an awful thing. Brothers and sisters, selfishness will make you lie, cheat, scheme, steal, set traps, write anonymous letters, put secrets in the hands of enemies and it'll even cause you to seek revenge and then I've discovered something else about selfishness. That there are some folk who will take selfishness and turn it into something spiritual because they will have the nerve to say that the Lord led me to do this. These selfish people in the case of Paul and Silas, were doing this based upon their selfishness. The only thing they had done was lead people to Christ, preach the truth and set people free from bondage. They were following the Lord and still experienced pain. I wonder if there is anybody who is here that's ever been like that? You've done all of the right things. You lived the way you ought to live and you still ended up in a season of pain. I came to tell you that goodness won't exempt you from your pain but this is not the only thing because the origin of pain was not just selfish people, but it was also their strange predicament.

We look at what it says in versus 22 and 23. It says, "Then the multitude rose up together against them and the magistrates tore off their clothes and commanded them to be beaten with rods and commanding the jailer to keep them securely. Having received such a charge he put them into the inner prison and fastened their feet in stocks." Let me tell you something, watch this now. When the false accusations of these selfish people got around the city, people who had not been impacted by Paul and Silas, joined forces with the selfish people and seized them. This is interesting because I need you to know that sometimes folk will turn against you that you haven't done anything to. They will join in with other people just to seek to destroy you. They dragged them in the court and look at what they did. Remember now, here's the origin of their pain. Remember first, it was the selfish people but now it's their strange predicament. Well, what's so strange? First of all they were stripped. Somebody say stripped. You've got to understand that this was meant for mental punishment. They were stripped of their clothing, made naked in public. Can I just tell you, unless you don't have good sense, to be stripped in public is humiliating and embarrassing. It's about inflicting mental punishment but then after they stripped them, they were then struck. This was physical punishment. They literally

received strikes. Paul and Silas were beaten with a whip in front of everybody. Not only were they stripped and struck but then they were stored, in other words they were secured in a prison. This was meant to bring about emotional punishment. I mean when you look at this, here they are and you got to understand what a Roman prison looked like. See a Roman prison doesn't look like the Arlington jail. This was a prison unlike anything you've ever seen in this country. Our modern prisons are more like resorts and retreat properties when you compare them to what Paul and Silas were in. The prisons of that day were dungeons, they were deep and dark and damp and dirty. They were dreary and disgusting and dangerous. See sometimes God allows us to get locked up in a prison and it's painful, it's not promising nor is it pleasant but God's not trying to destroy you in the prison; he's trying to get your praise out of you. See I came to inform you that if God allows you to enter a personal prison while you're in that prison, he's planning your release and restoration.

While you're in that prison, he's orchestrating your freedom and your future. Look at this, they are not only secured in a cell, but they're also shackled in chains. Say chains. They have stocks around their feet. This is meant to keep them from moving. It's about emotional pain. But aren't you glad that even when you're placed in chains that chains can't keep you from doing what we do for good. I mean chains might restrict your physical activity, but they cannot restrict your spiritual activity. When you look at the origin of their pain, it's no wonder they were in pain. Let me just pause right here and share something with you. I need you to understand that pain is not a possibility, it is an absolute certainty and many times it seems like the children of God always get the short end of the stick. But brothers and sisters, I came to let you know something; there will be rough times for every believer. There will be trouble. There will be trials. There will be tribulation. There will be problems. There will be pain. Your heart will hurt. You will ache. Your mind will be discomforted. Your loved ones will die. Your children will rebel. You will get sick. Your marriage will get into trouble. Your faithful service will be misinterpreted.

Your good deeds, your prayers, your hopes, your dreams, your thoughts nor your tithe can prevent you from experiencing periodic pain. I know that is not what you want to hear and I know that this morning you'd rather hear this is your season and your haters are going to stop hating on you this week. I know you'd rather hear me say that everything is going to be all right in three days. I know you'd rather hear me say, something that tickles your ears and your spirit. I know you'd rather have me say that your boss is going to be fired on Tuesday. I know you'd rather hear me say that the check is in the mail but I'm sorry, I wish I could tell you that but the truth is this may not be your week. I mean come on y'all, y'all have to admit to me sometime, it just ain't your week. Your situation may get worse before it gets better. Your haters may not leave you alone. You may not be healed. Your boss may not leave. Your spouse may not come home tonight. Your children may not respect you in the morning. The check may not be in the mail. There may not be any gain this week, just more pain, but what I can tell you is this. That you can transform your pain into praise and this is how we do it.

Watch this and I'm done y'all. In verse 25, it's right there. I mean all you got to do is read it. It says, "And at midnight, Paul and Silas prayed and sang praises under God." Listen, the first thing I want to tell you ain't on the line, it's in between the line, but the other two are on the line and I'm getting out of here. Watch this. The first thing I want to tell you, if you're going to transform your pain into praise, number one, you got to commit to shift. Listen to that. Commit to shift. Somebody help me say that today. Commit to shift. What does that mean? I mean, I know it ain't in the text. It ain't written on the line but I came to tell you, you might

wonder and ask the question, how could anyone praise God under such circumstances and conditions? I mean you're in jail for doing the right thing, how is it that you can praise God? Well, I came to tell you it depends upon what you focus on. That's why you got to learn how to shift your mind and shift your thinking. See if you are in a prison of experience today, let me encourage you to allow your pain to be transformed into praise. I mean look at this. Look, were they in pain? Yes, they were. Were they scared? I'm sure they were. Were they uncomfortable? I know they were. Did they feel abandoned? I bet they did. But what did they do or what did they not do? This is what happened. They did not let the pain of their experience eclipse their perspective. See instead of looking at their pain, they shifted their focus and started looking toward God. See I came to you today to tell you, you can have problems all around you but God will put your solution right in the midst of all of your problems. Let me help you understand that because I can tell y'all ain't getting this. But listen, a few years ago there was a tractor trailer that had overturned on the highway. And when the emergency crew arrived on the scene, they quickly discovered that there was fuel leaking out of the truck and it was running over into a surrounding grassy and wooded area. And so according to their method of operation, the first thing they were supposed to do is call for a truckload of peat moss. And so they got on the radio and they called for a truckload of peat moss.

Well the truckload of peat moss arrived, they got all of that peat moss out of the truck, put it all on the ground in order to absorb all the fuel that was running out of this truck, but not long after they had spread out all of the peat moss all of a sudden a rain came, a very hard rain and washed all of the peat moss away. This emergency crew quickly called for another truck to bring another load of peat moss. Well, in their haste and during their attempt to remedy their dilemma, no one realized that the truck that had overturned had a truck load of peat moss on it. In other words, they were focusing on the wrong thing instead of looking at what was on the truck that was already in their face. They were calling for something that they already had. Such is the problem with so many of us today.

In our moments of problems and pain, we often become focused on our problem so much so that we overlook the fact that our solution is right there where the problem is. That's right! Your solution is in the midst of your pain. I mean what can help you, you don't have to call for, you don't have to look for, God has already provided it. All you got to do is shift your mind, shift your thinking and shift what you're looking for, refocus on God and stop looking at your problem. See not only if you're going to make this transformation, should you commit to shift, but then secondly, you need to commit to supplication. Look at this. It says, "And at midnight, Paul and Silas prayed." Somebody shout prayed. That's important right there. Commit to supplication. Why would you say this word supplication pastor? Well, listen. Supplication is just a glorified pretty word for prayer. So instead of pouting, these men started praying. Instead of communicating with the g-u-a-r-d, the guard that was in the prison, they decided they were going to communicate with our big g-o-d our God. Thus, these dudes prayed.

They made their request known unto God and God answered their prayer. Listen, I got to tell you something, God is in the business of answering prayers. It kind of reminds me of a young man that many of us have heard in the media here lately, his name is Brian Banks. Brian was once a high school football star who had a great future ahead of him who had been scouted by USC and UCLA and a whole lot of other places and he was on his way to do something great. But some 10 years ago, while he was about 15 years old, something happened to that young man. He was accused of a crime that he did not commit. He was accused of rape and according to the former football star, he was accused and then he was charged with this crime. He refused to say

he did it. They tried to encourage him to say he did it, he refused to do it and the next thing you know he pleaded no contest. And because he did that he ended up having to be in prison; he ended up having to have a record and to register as a sex offender. Well something happened to him last year. The woman who made the accusation contacted him on Facebook and he said, and I ain't telling you what I said, I'm telling you what he said. He said when he first heard from her last year, he recalled praying for God to deliver him from his situation. Now watch this, this was last year. The woman contacted him who accused him nine years earlier of a crime that he did not commit and he prayed to God that God would deliver him from his situation and what did God do? Well, last month, he was exonerated, his record was clean and now there are NFL teams looking at him 10 years later to give him the opportunity that he missed because somebody mistreated him.

Listen, I came to tell you something, brothers and sisters and I know you're wondering, well what's this have to do with the sermon today. Well, it's important for you to understand something. That this situation that he prayed about was not the first time he prayed about it. Now, let me say that again. This situation that he prayed about, it was not the first time he had prayed about it. And this is important because when you look at Paul and Silas, it says, "And at midnight they were praying and singing." But notice something, and you have to really see this and you have to look at this translation to really understand it. They didn't start praying at midnight. When midnight came they were already praying. Y'all ain't hearing that. Listen. They didn't start praying at midnight. By the time the clock struck midnight, they were already praying but don't you think for one moment that this was the first time they had prayed about this thing because you see, I believe within my heart, if you have regular communication with God and you talk to him before you get in your mess, he'll help you. Y'all ain't hearing me here. If you talk to him before you get in your mess, he'll help you to get out of your mess. But that ain't the only thing I see here and I can tell y'all ain't feeling me. That's all right, I ain't feeling you either. I'm about to go here, but watch this.

Because there is one last thing I need to tell you here, that if you are going to transform your pain into praise, remember you got to commit to shift, you got to commit to supplication but finally you've got to do this last thing. You have to commit to singing. Somebody say singing. This is really important because I know some of y'all can't sing a lick. I mean you can't carry a tune in a bag. You can't carry it if somebody put it in a bucket and put a top on it. But what I want you to understand, that when I reference singing, singing ain't about singing up here with a microphone for the worship experience. I want you to know that every believer ought to have a song in their heart. I mean look at them, they are singing but notice something. They sang after they prayed. I mean look at this; I mean they are singing. They got this song going but they don't sing before they pray, they sing after they pray. I mean as they pray first then they were able to sing. And the reason they did this is because, I don't know about y'all but there are sometimes when I go through painful experiences in my own life and I don't necessarily feel like singing.

I mean I kind of lose my song, don't feel like singing, hurt so bad, head hung so low, experience so discouraging that I don't feel like...I know I ain't talking to you. I'm talking about me because I know you're always singing but it ain't like that for me. Sometimes I don't feel like singing a song. In fact, I'll turn the radio off and dare anybody to sing around me because I ain't feeling it in my spirit. But I came to tell you something. That if you ever get nerve enough to pray after you have prayed, then singing gets better after you said your prayer. Y'all ain't hearing what I'm saying now. That's why when the choir gets together on Sunday morning, before they

come out to sing, they pray first. And the reason they pray is because somebody had a bad night last night and they don't feel like singing. Somebody ran into somebody like you driving on the road. Gave them sign language, they don't feel like singing. Somebody just walked into the sanctuary and somebody has cracked out of their faith with something they should not have said out of their mouth. They don't feel like singing. They got in the back, somebody switched the song. It ain't the song they rehearsed on yesterday. They're mad, got attitude. They don't feel like singing. But I came to tell you if you pray first...y'all ain't hearing this. If you pray first, when God lifts up your heart, when God lifts up your spirit, after you have prayed, you'll feel like singing. Now look at here because when I look at this, let me put it this way. You may not...listen, singing has a way of making you lose yourself. Let me tell you how it is. Singing will make you...what do you mean by that pastor? I mean it can make you forget where you are. If you ever sing, let me help you out because...have you ever been in the shower and start singing? The shower makes everybody sound good.

Even if you can't sing, your hum sounds good when you're in the shower. And when you are in that shower and you are singing, you'll lose yourself and forget you're in the shower. That's because singing will make you lose yourself. Sometimes people ride with me in the car and when they ride with me in the car and a certain song is on the radio or I'm playing a certain CD or something and it's a song they like, they'll just break out and start singing in the car. Just like ain't nobody in the car but them. Y'all...whatever. And they start singing all loud, getting all into this song and I look at them like what are you doing? I mean can't I enjoy the song...but because it was their song they lost themselves in the song because there is something about a song that will make you lose yourself. I want you to understand that you can be locked up in a personal prison experience but God is able to free your heart so that while you're even in your experience, he'll free you to the point that you'll be able to sing even when you're locked up but you're free at the same time. Somebody say, well what do you mean by that brother pastor? Well, it's easy, all you have to do is just keep reading the text because when you keep reading the text you'll discover at midnight that after they prayed and sang an earthquake came.

And the earthquake caused their shackles to fall off and the doors of the prison to open. But notice something that Paul and Silas did not leave the jail even after the doors were open and their shackles were unloosed. The next thing you know they're in dialogue with a man that's a guard there who is about to commit suicide and they say to him, don't do yourself any harm, we're still here, we ain't going nowhere. And when you look at this, it's amazing, that God has arranged it so that the doors are open and they can leave the prison if they want to but they're still in the prison because they made a personal decision and we're not leaving right now. We got some other work to finish. Well, what this represents is the fact that their minds were free and when your mind is free, somebody may lock up your party but they can't lock you up because your mind has been set free. See their mind was free, that's why they could sing, they could pray, they could shift their thinking because their mind had been set free and I came to help somebody today to share with you that if you're going to transform your pain into praise, you've got to shift, you've got to offer supplication and you got to sing and God will set your mind free. Is there anybody here that knows that God will set your mind free? I mean anybody can praise him when everything is all right. Anybody can praise him when the bills are paid. Anybody can praise him when their body is well. Anybody can praise him when their friends are plentiful. Anybody can praise him when their job is secure.

Anybody can praise him when the children are acting right. Anybody can praise him when your spouse is committed. Anybody can praise him when your family is connected.

Anybody can praise him when your mortgage is paid for. Anybody can praise him when your car is paid for, but can you praise him when everything has gone wrong? Can you praise him in the midst of your pain? Well, I clowned out something and I'm done y'all but I have to tell you this. I had a friend of mine I went to visit some years ago and when I went to visit his house I noticed something. He had a bird in the house. And you know, I ain't too fond of birds being in the house but this bird was flying around the house. He went over to the cage, he whistled and the bird flew to the cage and the bird went inside the cage and he locked up the cage and we went on talking and doing what we were doing. I kept looking over there at that bird because the bird was in the cage and the bird was just singing, singing. I noticed something, when he was out of the cage he wasn't saying nothing but when he got in the cage he was singing. And I kept looking at that bird and so finally curiosity got the best of me and I looked at him and I said, "Fred, let me ask you a question" I said, "I noticed something Fred, your bird wasn't singing when he was out of the cage, but when he went in the cage I notice now that your bird is singing. I mean in other words, when he was free, he wasn't singing but when he got locked up, the bird started singing." That didn't sit right with me. It didn't sound right. I mean if you're going to sing it ought to be when you're free. You shouldn't be singing when you're locked up in a cage and can't get out. But my buddy looked at me and said, "You don't know my bird" and I said, "Well, tell me about your bird" and Fred said, "He's not singing because he's in the cage," and I said "Well, why is he singing?" and Fred said, "He's singing because he gets fed in the cage." I said, "What?" and Fred said, "I don't feed him when he's flying around. The only time I give him something to eat is when he's in the cage."

Well, I came by to tell you Mt. Zion, you have to come to the place where you can lift up the number of God and praise him even when you're in your cage. Praise him even when you're in a prison because the same God that feeds the little sparrow is the same God that's able to feed you. Is there anybody here that knows that God will feed you? I love that song, "He walks with me and he talks with me and he tells me I am his own." Ain't he all right? Transforming your pain into praise. Let me tell you something, you never know what a person has been through. You never know their pain. And everybody smiling ain't smiling because they've not been through something. Sometimes you're just smiling because you're trying to get through it. Don't you think that everybody come to church happy? Sometimes you come broken. Anybody besides me ever come to church broken? Broken, mmhmm. Broken, not knowing how things are going to work out. Broken, not knowing what's going to happen next. Broken, wishing, praying, hoping that God will change things and God doesn't seem to be doing anything. You're looking for deliverance and God is on another assignment. You're looking for God to do something in your life and for you and he's blessing all around you. All around you. People who live on this side of you, blessed. This side, blessed. In front of you, cross the street, blessed. Behind you, blessed. It seems like you're the only one struggling. Sometimes you're in a season of pain. But listen, I want you to know something. Here's the good news. No season lasts forever. Did you hear that?

No season, no season. Sometimes God will give you an extended season of something but nothing, not one thing lasts forever. It may be drawn out. It may seem like God's got you on delay, but you need to learn how to sing in your cage. You need to learn how to sing in your pain. To sing in your struggle. To sing in your problem. And if you learn how to sing, if you turn that pain into praise, you'll lose yourself in your praise. And when you lose yourself in the praise, you won't focus on what's going wrong and all the mess. It doesn't mean that things have changed and I need to help y'all understand it, listen. God doesn't always...and stop always



thinking that God has to change your situation. Stop thinking that you're not going to be all right unless God changes your situation. God doesn't always have to change your situation. He can just take care of you right where you are in the mess that you're in because sometimes your provisions are right there in the midst of your problem. It's right before you. The same thing that almost killed you can be the thing that keeps you alive. You know there are some medicines you take to keep you alive, but if you take too much of it it will kill you. It's a matter of dosage and I want you to know that God's not trying to kill you. He's not trying to give you an overdose. He's trying to get you through the season until you get to the next one. Listen, if you're here today and you're not in a coveted relationship with God, I want you to know something. That right now is your moment, it's your opportunity, and it's your chance to enter into a coveted relationship with God through Jesus Christ. And exactly what does that mean? That means giving your life, your heart and your all to the Lord Jesus Christ.



## SERMON III

### WHY THE SCARS?

**DR. CHARLES BOOTH**

God bless you, you may be seated [he is thanking all those that have attended]. Good evening. I praise God for yet another day of living and for the opportunity that brings us once again into this sacred space. And as we come together tonight for the purpose of worship, we come knowing with certainty that this is the day the Lord has made and because of that we rejoice and we are glad in it.

I want to express my gratitude and appreciation to Dr. Wendy Deichmann and all of the wonderful people at United and Dr. Harold Hudson who have made this experience possible. When I began preaching 48 years ago at the age of 17, a senior in high school, I had visions so I thought of where God would carry me in life and ministry but I had absolutely no idea that he would carry me to this pinnacle point and so I'm grateful tonight for their thoughtfulness and for their integrity and for the kindness that they have extended to me in allowing me to experience such a moment as this in my lifetime. And very often when experiences like this come, they come posthumously when someone has closed his or her eyes in the hush of death but you have allowed me to experience this in my lifetime and I shall be eternally grateful to you. I want to thank both of these presidents, Dr. Ramseth of the Trinity Lutheran Seminary and Dr. Wendy Deichmann of United for their confidence in me and allowing me to share what little bit I know about preaching with students at both of these theological institutions.

It's become almost now routine for me on Sunday morning when I stand on this mount to address the disciples of Mt. Olivet by saying that then I shall make now another feeble attempt at preaching. And I think that anybody with a modicum of intelligence who preaches can agree with that that whatever we do is nothing but a meager, feeble attempt and one never becomes a master at this craft. The apostle Paul said, "I am forever seeking to apprehend that which has apprehended me" so that continues to be my quest and I thank God for your confidence in me.

I want to also acknowledge the presence of Dr. Timothy J. Clarke who is pastor of the First Church of God and the presiding \_\_\_\_\_ of the Berean Fellowship, a friend and a brother and I'm so glad he's here tonight. I also want to acknowledge the presence of the Reverend Dr. Otha Gilyard who is pastor of the Shiloh Baptist Church in our community and also the president of the Ohio Baptist General Convention. So we thank God for these wonderful persons who are here tonight.

Allow me to be personal for just a moment, my niece is here, Ms. Kelly Baptist who comes from Baltimore tonight and she is the preacher that God has raised up in our family, and I want her to stand, and I want her to stand [applause]. She is my sister's youngest daughter, a graduate of Hampton University and now she is at the Samuel Dewitt Proctor School of Theology at Virginia Union University. Amen. Preparing herself for ministry. Allow me also to acknowledge the presence of Dr. Gene Harris who is superintendent of Columbus Public Schools and she was...stand up Dr. Harris. Dr. Harris has been out of town and her plane was delayed tonight which is why she was not able to come and share with us earlier by way of giving greetings but she has come to worship and that is characteristic of her. She is the vice chair of our ministry of trustees and she and her husband deacon trustee, Stanley Harris are more than members, they are both members and friends. So it's a joy to greet her. Allow me to greet

all of you who have honored us with your presence and you have come some for the first time, others for yet another time to share with us in this conference that we pray will be of enormous benefit to you in your personal life as well as in your ministry and please know, that we do not take for granted your coming and sharing with us and I certainly want to thank the ministerial staff and our administrative staff here at Mt. Olivet for all the support that you have given to make this experience possible. Amen.

I am very humbled by what Bishop Thomas and Bishop Ross have done tonight. I have been many, many places in 48 years and preached at many venues but no one has ever done this for me and I'm grateful to both of you for this and I'm quite humbled by it. If I were of lighter pigmentation you would see me blush [laughter] but since that is a biological impossibility, you take from me I am blushing.

We have some of the finest preachers and presenters in our nation with us these three days and we want you to come out and be supportive of them. I want to thank the Reverend Dr. Sir Walter L. Mack Jr. of the Union Church in Winston-Salem for his excellent workshop [applause]. He dealt with creative and innovative ways of ministry for churches of the 21st century and we were greatly benefited by that. Dr. Carolyn Knight will be our lay teacher on tomorrow night and she will deal with this whole idea of creativity between pastor and pews so we look forward to her sharing with us. Please be out tomorrow morning at 9 o'clock for our practice of the presence of God. Dr. Rita Twiggs and anybody who was with us last year knows that those two mornings were powerful times and she has a unique way of devotionally placing us in the presence of God and then at 10 o'clock my twin will preach, Dr. Mack King Carter of Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. You ought to be able to see the resemblance, amen. But we call one another twin because we were born on the same day, month and year so I'm so happy that his health permits him to be with us tonight. Amen.

The time is well spent and I don't want to hold you too long, but there was a word that I want to lift tonight from the 20th chapter of the gospel of St. John. John chapter 20, and upon the finding of the text would you stand upon your feet for just a few minutes, a few moments really, as I read and you're hearing the 19th and 20th verses of this 20th chapter of John. I read tonight from the New International Version. John chapter 20 verses 19 and 20. "On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together with the doors locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said "Peace be with you." After he said this he showed them his hands and side." The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord. "He showed them his hands and side." You may return to your seated places.

We have chosen this year's theme, preaching Jesus Christ with prophetic focus and our concentration has largely centered upon those wonderful and lofty words that our Lord quoted in the fourth chapter of Luke, those words that graciously fell from the lips of lyrical prophet Isaiah chapter 61 to be precise. And in conjunction with this theme, I want to lift these words that I have read and you're hearing and I want to raise a question, why the scars? Why the scars? So very often when we look at people who have attained great and significant height in their own personal quest for life and living, we normally sit back, cross our legs and fold our arms and almost with a gentle sigh look at that person or those persons and declare that they have it made. I think that in many instances we do these people who attain great heights, a tremendous disservice. And we do a great disservice primarily because we are looking at their exterior without really giving consideration to the interior, the mountains they have had to climb, the valleys through which they have had to travel and the pain and travail which has been a part of their pilgrimage. Not one of us who is in this thing called mortality lives without pain. There

are those of us who would like to create the impression that nothing bothers us, that everything is always on an even keel but nothing is really attained in life without pain in the pilgrimage.

Sometimes when we read hymns and we are lifted by what is the beauty of their lyrics; we do not understand sometimes the story behind the hymns. Anybody that has known me across the years knows that I'm a lover of the hymns and I make no apology for that at all because I realize that when reading the hymns or singing them at least, there is a story behind the hymn because there is a life behind the hymn that has written the hymn. At the old church we used to sing "What a Friend We Have in Jesus" written by Joseph Scriven not realizing that he wrote that hymn out of great pain and sorrow. The love that he had given a woman was suddenly turned back. The engagement finished and the marriage never taking place. "When peace like a river attendeth my way, sorrows like sea billows roll; whatever my lot thou has taught me to say, it is well with my soul." Those are the words of H.G. Scrafford written at the aftermath of the death of his two daughters who drowned with him in their maiden voyage, of course the watery deep of the Atlantic as they were leaving the United States for the United Kingdom. Sometimes we fail to look at the interior.

Thinking about the great poets for just a moment, we think about somebody like Schopenhauer who said that, "Life is nothing more than an endless pain with a painful end." Or we think about the writer Shakespeare who said that life is nothing more than a tragic comedy played over and over again with only slight changes in costume and scenery. We read about Paul Laurence of Dunbar who said, "A crust of bread and a corner to sleep in, a minute to laugh and an hour to weep in, a pint of joy to a peck of trouble and never a laugh but the moans come double and that is life." Nobody can read Schopenhauer or Shakespeare. Nobody can read Dunbar without raising the issue, what pushed them to write those lines and they sleep in their grave tonight and we will never know exactly what was behind the push and the thrust of those words but one can be well assured that there was some pain they had to deal with and that pain represented a scar somewhere deep in their soul. A lot of us don't want to admit it tonight, but we've come to worship because we are scarred. And there are those of us so sophisticated and so erudite so aristocratic if you will that we frown upon people who give emotional outbursts or shall I put it another way, who give witness to what it is that they believe and we frown, wrinkle up our noses but we don't know their story. Somebody ought to be able to say with me tonight this is my story and this is my song and you don't know what I've been through but I am going to praise my savior all the day long. Everybody has come here with some scar. I've got a scar, you've got a scar. All God's children have scars.

In this 20th chapter of John we're dealing with the evening of the first resurrection day. The sun has settled behind the western hills and 10 of the Lord's disciples, have gathered somewhere in a nameless room in Jerusalem. Judas is dead having hung himself. Thomas is not with them because he is so shattered by the trauma of what occurred out on that hill called Calvary just three days before but John reports that the remaining 10 thought it wise and well to make their way to a nameless room somewhere in Jerusalem and there they locked the door John says for fear of the Jews. Now you and I look back on that text with 21 centuries of history between it and us and we might say well, why did they gather in fear? Well, you would have gathered in fear as well if you had been labeled among those who followed him and if you had witnessed the way that he died and the thought would be if they did this to our leader, the one that we called Savior, the one that we called redeemer, the one that we thought represented the prophetic vision of Isaiah, what will they then do to us? Anybody who preaches the gospel of Jesus Christ is a candidate for scarring. I come against this belief that is so apparent today in

many of our churches and particularly in our African-American churches, where there is the belief that you can be a prophet and not have any scars. Anybody who follows the barefoot Galilean, anybody who claims discipleship under that Nazarene carpenter is a candidate for scars. The text says that Jesus came in. The doors were locked but he came in anyhow and if you want something to shout about before I get started, let me shout you on this. The Lord can invade your lock circumstance. I don't care what or who has you locked up tonight, the God that I serve can invade your locked captivity and give you release. Can I get an amen? [congregation says amen]. Do I have a witness in here that God is able to invade your privacy and lead you from where you are to where you ought to be? He came in with the doors locked.

And I feel sorry for Thomas because Thomas missed the first post resurrection sermon of Jesus. Notice what Jesus says, it wasn't a long sermon, it was a very brief one, "Peace be unto you." And John says, "That the Lord does not utter this with declaration. He does not say it with interrogation, but he says it with exclamation, "Peace be unto you." And that word peace does not just mean the absence of conflict or the absence of chaos but peace means may God give you every good thing. So that whenever I ask for that peace that passes all human understanding, I am asking God to give me every good thing. But what arrests me about the text priest is that when Jesus shows himself, after he preaches his four-word sermon, the first thing that he does is reveal his scar. He shows them the print of the nails in his hand and he shows them the gaping wound in his side where the thrust of the Romans Centurion sword had gone. I've often wondered why Jesus just showed the wounds in his hands and in his sides. Why not the wounds in his feet? That's up for theological and hermeneutical speculation. But I've got a thought tonight and since I'm a black preacher I have poetic license so I can exercise my imagination. I believe that Jesus had omnition understanding and that he could already think about what Thomas said or what Thomas would say except I see the print of the nail in his hand and the wound in his side, I will not believe it.

So the Lord shows the print of the nail in his hand and the gaping wound in his side in advance because his omnition understanding as he looks at the mind of Thomas says that's all Thomas asks for. That if he wanted to see where the spike went in my feet, all he had to do was ask me. But I wish I had about 10 folk in here who can give a witness tonight that the Lord will give you what you ask for. Some of us have not because we ask not. What bothers me about the text, what upsets me about the text is that when Jesus gets up out of the grave in that resurrected body, when he appears before his disciples, why not appear unscarred? I mean after all God can do anything but fail, why not get rid of the print of the nails? Why not get rid of the gaping wound in his side and while you're at it, why not get rid of the print in his feet? Why not present a blemishless Savior? But he appears with his scars because the Lord wants us to understand that there are scars we have to live with and not only are there scars we have to live with but in living with our scars Kenneth Clayton, God has a message in the scars. The problem with some of us who preach is we are trying to hide our scars. But what I love about Jesus Christ is he revealed his scars because his scars are his passport into your life and mine.

I thank God tonight that I don't pray to a scarless Savior. But the writer of Hebrews says he wasn't always tempted like as we are for we do not have a high priest who cannot be touched with the feelings of our infirmities but he was and always tempted like as we are, yet he was without sin. But our mothers and our fathers put it this way, Jesus knows all about my struggles and he will guide until the day is done. There's not a friend like the lowly Jesus, no not one, no not one.

Why the scars? Now that I'm out of this introduction, let me get to the sermon. The question before us tonight is why the scars? First of all I believe that Jesus showed the disciples and all of us his scars because they represent his badge of identification. He wanted those disciples to know with certainty that he was not a phantom, that he was not a ghost, that he was not an apparition, that he was not an aberration, but that he was in fact that Christ; no longer simply the Jesus of history but now the Christ of eternity. He was that Christ that suffered and bled and died up on that hill called Friday three days before. He wanted them to know that if you're going to preach a convincing gospel, if you're going to be prophetic in an age when prophecy has declined, if you're going to be prophetic in a day and time when a apostasy reigns, you must be convinced that our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is a living reality, not a figment of somebody's imagination, not somebody held captive in a theological seminary, but that he is somebody who walks with you. And that he talks with you and that he tells you that you are his own. You must be convinced that Jesus Christ is a living reality.

Where has the prophetic voice gone? If it has not disappeared, we can at least claim that it is muted. There ought to be a voice that speaks out in a day and time when issues are clamoring for debate, discussion and dialogue. I may upset some of you in here but I don't care. Somebody has to say something about same-sex marriage. I'm sorry but I still believe that marriage is between a man and a woman. I don't have to go to Leviticus 18, I don't have to go to Romans 1, all I have to do is go to Genesis chapter 1, verse 27, "Male and female created he them." I'm a man and thank God I am a man. Do I have any men in here who are glad to be men and women who are glad to be women? Where is the prophetic voice? Too many of us in the pulpit are looking at this thing constitutionally, sociologically, psychologically but we are not looking at it theologically. I don't take my cue from the constitution; I take my cue from the word of God, for the word of God is still a lamp unto my feet. Come on, I feel him tonight. The word of God is still a light upon my path. My ultimate allegiance is not to the flag but to the cross. It was at the cross, I said it was at the cross, I said it was at the cross where I first saw the light! And the burdens of my heart rolled away. It was there by faith I received my sight and now I'm happy. Do I have any happy folk up in here? Where is the prophetic voice?

Racism is real and Barack Obama has discovered that now in four years, that his election to the presidency in 2008 did not eradicate racism. We are not living in a post-racial era. John Boehner and the republicans have reminded him of that. The tea party people are reminding him that even though he had a white mother he is still a black man. Where is the prophetic voice? Our people are in poverty. Our people are living with foreclosure notes in their hand, where is the prophetic voice? Many of you up in here tonight don't even have healthcare and we have a president who's tried to get healthcare to be a national consideration and there are forces that are mitigating against that, where is the prophetic voice? Sometimes you will have to go through something in order for God to use you like he wants to use you and some of us will get scars for the positions we take.

Do I have any preachers up in here tonight who are still of the youth and kind that will declare for God I'll live, I said for God I'll live, come on I feel like hollering tonight. For God I'll live and for God I'll die! And why do you preach with that kind of certainty? I'll tell you why because early one Sunday morning, he got up, I said he got up...that ought to be our rallying cry. He got up from the grave, robbed the grave of its victory and took the sting out of death. Sit down, sit down. Dostoevsky says that people reject their prophets and slay them but love their martyrs and honor those they have slain. I just said something and for you note takers, you ought to take this down. People reject their prophets and slay them but love their martyrs and honor

those they have slain. Jesus Christ was a murdered prophet. The state and the church got together. Judaism at its best and Rome represented by people like Pontius Pilate and Herod. They got together and conspired and murdered the Savior and those who represented traditional Judaism describes the Pharisees, the Sadducees' high priest and the like, all got together because Jesus was a threat to their establishment. But in the midst of it all, he outlived all of them and somebody ought to shout right now, he's alive [congregation shouts]! You ought to give somebody a high five and tell them you ask me how I know he lives? Honey, don't get me to talking tonight! I know who woke me up this morning. I know who started me on my way. His name is wonderful, come on I ain't ready to go yet.

Why the scars? The scars were there to identify who he really was. But the scars are a lesson also and this is particularly true for those of us who preach. The scars are there to leave for us the lesson of endurance. The race is not given to the swift, nor is the battle ever given to the strong, but the one who endures to the end. Under him onto her shall be given what? The crown of life.

My friend P.M. Smith is here, pastor at the Huber Memorial Church up on York Road in Baltimore. I've known him since we were in the 7th grade. We met in the halls of the Booker T. Washington Junior High School, that's what we called school between elementary and high school then, now it's the middle school, back then it was junior high. Every now and then I feel like a fossil. I remember going out for the track team and because of my long legs and my ability to harness my win, I thought Bishop Ross, that I was an ideal candidate for the track team but particularly in cross country. We went out to Druid Hill Park and on the first day the coach gave us our assignment and I had not run for seven minutes before I felt like giving up the ghost and every now and then, you ought to know what you're made for. Every now and then, you ought to know what you're built for and once you discover what you are not made for, come on help me. Once you discover what you are not built for, you need to back away and get in your own lane. I'm a looking for somebody tonight to say "Stay in your lane." [congregation says this too]. I discovered that I was not built for cross country. But I was built for the sprint. The 100-yard dash and I was pretty good at it during the time that I stuck it out and I learned that cross country was all about endurance. Anybody who picks up this mantle called the preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ must not look at this thing as a sprint, it's cross country. You got to run this race, sometimes up and sometimes down, you got to run this race. Whether they like you or don't like you, you've got to run this race.

Whether your preaching leaves you popular or unpopular, you've got to learn how to run this race because ministry and particularly the prophetic ministry is about endurance. He that endures to the end onto him, onto her shall be given the crown of life. That was the genius of Jesus Christ. He was able to endure the race that was set before him. It did not matter the scribes tried to deter him, it did not matter that Pharisees and Sadducees tried to deter him, he was determined to run the race with patience. And when you consider the agony and the anguish and we ought not just pass by Calvary and lift thou voices and politely walk by, he went through hell for the privilege that you and I enjoy tonight of sitting up here in his house. Some of us haven't said amen yet, some of us are looking all wise and otherwise, but when I think about the hell he went through for me, not only does it cause me to tremble, but it causes me to shout glory hallelujah!

Can I take a praise break for about 10 seconds and thank God tonight for the suffering of his son? He was wounded for my transgressions. Bruised for my iniquities. The \_\_\_\_\_ peace was upon him and by his strife, can I put it another way, by his scars I am healed. Do I

have any healed folk up in here? Not just healed in body but healed in mind and healed in spirit, oh help me Holy Ghost! Does anybody know he's a healer? You got to run this race with patience because sometimes God will make you wait on him. Ain't no need for you to act holy than thou. Somebody in here has a prayer that God has not yet answered. Somebody has a problem for which God has not given you a solution but you hang on anyhow because they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. They shall mount upon wings like an eagle, run and not get weary, walk and not faint. Too many of us, particularly in the preaching ministry, act as though once we come into a church, everything must be our way. I remember when I first came to this church, the opposition I had from the officary. My problem was never with the folk. My problem was with those who thought they had power but how they misread me was I knew who had all power. And if God puts you there, nobody can move you. Okay, y'all ain't got it yet. What God has for me is for me. Can I get about 45 amens? That what God has for me is for me. But I've got to learn to wait on him. I've got to learn to trust him and if I trust and never doubt, Lance West he will surely bring me out. Take your burdens to the Lord and leave them there and when you leave them there don't come back and pick them up.

In 1963, it became quite apparent that Hank Aaron would at least tie Babe Ruth's record of 714 home runs; he became the subject of vicious, heinous racial attacks. We never knew this until after he had retired. But when it became clear that he was going to tie the record, his children were threatened. He would get hate mail and there were those who said that he ought not go to the outfield and take his position for there would be somebody in the stands with a high-powered rifle who would end his mortality. Hank Aaron made it known to certain people that these death threats had come his way but when they suggested that he miss some of the games he said, "Oh no, God didn't give me this talent to submerge and put under a bush." Hank Aaron said that the Lord said I am the salt of the Earth. Hank Aaron said reading that beatific vision of Matthew declared that I am a light that shines in darkness. A city set upon a hill that cannot be hid. And I know if God gave me the talent, God expects me to use the talent and in using the talent, God will take care of me. When the season closed in 1963, he tied Hank Aaron's record with 714 home runs.

On opening day, April 8, 1964 when he came to bat for the first time, old hammering Hank with the power of the Holy Spirit...see when you're black in America you better believe in God. I'm not saying that white folk don't, I'm not saying red or yellow folk don't but if you're black in America, you've got to believe in God because at the end of the day you don't have anybody else but God. Can I get a shout on "but God?" Can I get a praise on "but God?" How many of you know you made it because only God could have brought you to where you are. He'll make your enemies your footstool. On the eighth day of April 1964, he hit that homeroom and knocked it out of the ballpark. What is my point? Here was somebody who had endurance and he was not ashamed to show us how enduring you can be if you trust God. Does anybody in here still believe that God will take care of you?

I know some of y'all don't like the hymn but can I quote one tonight? I mean can I really quote one tonight? Do I have 75 hymn lovers in here? Can I quote a hymn tonight? "Be not dismayed, but every time God will take care of you. Beneath his wings of love abide, God will take care of you." Can I quote my mother's verse? "No matter what may be the test" y'all not feeling me, I said, "No matter what may be the test, God will take care of you." Here's the shout, "Lean weary one" go ahead and lean on him, go ahead and lean on him, lean weary one, yeah Lord! No, no I ain't ready to go yet. "Lean weary one upon his breast, God will take care of you."



Why the scars? Number one they are his badge of identification, number two they teach us the lesson of endurance, but after all of that to say this, the real reason for the scars is that your scars are your testimony. Now you may not have a sermon every week but my God you ought to have a testimony. You may not have theological debt but you ought to have testimony. You may not have hermeneutical understanding but you ought to have a testimony. Some of us have forgotten that. How many of you remember in the old church, long before we had praise dances and praise ministry, ain't nothing wrong with none of that, but in the old days we had devotions. Somebody would read the word of God, then somebody would call on God as if heaven and earth were coming together, then they would get up and testify. Well I know all of it wasn't true, some of it was test the line. But every now and then a real testimony would come through. And before we talk about how good the Lord is, how far the Lord has brought us, they would talk about how God was with them. I said in the midnight hour, how he put food on their table, how he put water on their tongue, how he put a hat on their head, shoes on their feet and somebody would holler out I love the Lord. Yeah! Because he heard my cry and pitied my every groan. But as long as trouble arrives, I'll hasten to his throne.

May I help you tonight? May I edify you tonight? May I enlighten you tonight? There is a categorical and definitive difference between a blessing and a testimony. When you talk about God gave you a new house or God gave you a new job or God healed your body, that's not a testimony, that's a blessing because a blessing is that which contributes to your happiness and your wellbeing. So your house contributes to your happiness and wellbeing. Your job contributes to your happiness and wellbeing. Your healing contributes to your happiness and wellbeing but the testimony is the evidence and the public declaration that supports that which you call a blessing. So the testimony is not that I have a new house, but how I got the house. The testimony, I say the testimony, is not that I'm healed but it's what I went through in order to get here. Somebody ought to meet me at the alter and tell me on a Tuesday night that I thank my God that I don't just have a blessing but I got a testimony. I said I wasn't going to tell nobody but I just can't, yeah...keep it to myself. Can I get an "I can't keep it to myself?" Praise in Mt. Olivet on a Tuesday night. You ought to look at somebody and tell somebody the Lord's been good to me. I've got a testimony. I've been through hell but the Lord is good. I've had a hard time but the Lord is good. I still don't know how I'm going to make it but the Lord is good. Yeah! Can I get a witness in here that the Lord will stick with you? That the Lord will fight your battle? I ought to get a shout up in here! Be not dismayed, what a happy time! God will, I said God will yeah! God will take care of you! Look at somebody and stare them in the face, say I hadn't planned to shout but when I think about...the goodness of Jesus, yeah, yeah, yeah and he's done for me. My soul, my sanctified soul, my blood-washed soul, my saved soul, cries out hallelujah! Somebody shout tonight! I'm saved by his power divine! Saved to new life sublime. Life now is sweet. My joy is complete because I'm saved. Do I have anybody up in here who's not ashamed to tell God thank you for my scars? Thank you for the hell I've been through. Thank you for my trouble. Thank you for my trial. Thank you for my tribulation. You ought to thank God for the print of the nail in your hand. Thank God for the gaping wound in your soul.

I used to hide my scar but I've learned that my scar is my testimony. Lost my eye when I was seven years old but God said preach anyhow. Don't try to hide it. Don't try to hide it but show your scar. Can I give you a testimony? When I told this story one Sunday, or rather one night in a revival out in Des Moines, Iowa, when I got through preaching Mack, a man came up to me and called the church to order. The church was walking out of the door but the man said I



got to make my testimony. I heard this man talk about his scar and for all of these years, and I was to learn that he was 78 years old. He said I've been embarrassed and I've been shamed and I've been humiliated by the same thing. I've had one eye for the last 70 years but because you testified and because you showed your scar and he started jumping up and down and he said I'm going to testify that I said that I wasn't going to tell nobody but I just can't yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah...I just can't keep it to myself. Somebody holler! I thank God for my scar! My scar is my power! My scar is my joy! Say yeah! Say yeah! Say yeah, yeah! Say yeah, yeah, yeah! Say yeah! Say yeah! Say yeah! Say yeah! Say yeah! Say yeah! Say yeah! Say yeah! Say yeah! Say yeah! Yeah! Yeah! Come on can I just holler? Yeah! Come on shake somebody's hand. Tell somebody I thank God for my scar. I may not know yours and you may not know mine but thank God through it all, I said through it all, yeah! Through it all I've learned.

I've learned to trust. Let's all come to our feet. I've learned to trust in Jesus. I've learned to trust in God. I've learned...let's all come to our feet.

# IDENTIFYING THE PAIN

## “Moving The Wounded To Wholeness”

OPENING PRAYER	11:00 a.m.	Reverend Campbell
INTRODUCTION ( <b>Reflection</b> )	11:05-11:10 a.m.	Reverend Campbell
SURVEY QUESTIONS ( <i>Pain Experience Survey</i> )	11:10-11:30 a.m.	Reverend Campbell
SESSION III ( <i>The, Blessing of Adversity</i> )	11:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m.	Dr. Ballard
SESSION IV ( <i>Embracing Wholeness</i> )	12:10-12:40 p.m.	Reverend Campbell
CLOSING REMARKS	12:50-12:55 p.m.	Reverend Campbell
CLOSING PRAYER	12:55 p.m.	Dr. Ballard

# Embracing Wholeness

## **WHAT IS WHOLENESS?**

Being in a state of wholeness means completely free of wound or injury with nothing missing and everything complete, perfect, unbroken, and uncut; perfectly healthy and free of any defect, deformity, mistake or impairment having all its proper parts and components

*(Denying the right for the illness, incident, or condition of existing to dictate truth to you)*

## **A PERSPECTIVE ON WHOLENESS**

**John 20:19-25**

The evidence of a previous life, incident, a condition of existence  
Jesus was exercising and demonstrating His power over it  
He knew that it was done and complete  
He used it as a reference point, a teaching point  
God the Father got Him up, then He showed up  
He spoke like a Victor verse a Victim  
By His willingness to point to as a point proof of Him overcoming  
He is moving forward in the Kingdom with Power, Authority, and Demonstration

# Embracing Wholeness

## “Wilt thou be made whole?”

### **WHOLENESS IS A HARVEST AND A HARVEST COMES FROM SEED?**

*In his book, Handle with Prayer, Alan Cohen says that to think is to create.*

All thought creates after its kind  
Which are you choosing  
The present or the past  
The cause or the effect

### **WHOLENESS IS A CHOICE**

Are you willing to choose a different thought?  
What will it take for you to choose a different idea?  
An idea that will shift your focus to a different outcome, and outcome you want

# Embracing Wholeness

## ***THE TEACHING OF HIS WORD (Luke 5:16-20)***

The Power of the Lord being present to heal  
A Chapter verse The Complete Story  
Represents the platform for the next move of God in your life  
Revelation and Demonstration  
It awakens you to the possibilities God has for your life  
Meeting Place for God's Power to engage your weakness

## ***BARTIMAEUS (MARK 10:46-52)***

### ***He heard***

His faith was voice activate! (They will be times when you can not see your way out)  
He cried out in spite of opposition  
He seized the moment

### ***His actions commanded Jesus attention***

The were many voices around Jesus  
But He responded to one crying out  
He was seeking divine intervention  
Jesus must now act  
God responses to the cry of His people will result in the benefit to the believer

# Embracing Wholeness

## ***PAIN LOOKS FOR SOLUTIONS /ANSWERS/REMIDIES***

***Mark 5:25-34***

Change the way she saw herself

Change her speech

Mind picture

She saw new possibilities

She spoke about her possibilities verse her pain

She spoke of her future verses her past

You must make an assertive effort to speak words of life and not death

Choose to speak what you want verses what circumstance are saying you should get

# Embracing Wholeness

**RENAMING THE MOMENTS OF YOUR LIFE**

## Genesis 35:16-18

## Genesis 31: 28-32

*Ben-o'-ni: Son of my sorrow>>>>>>Benjamin: Son of my right hand*

# Pain

Hurt

## Disappointment

## Dry Moment

## Strength

## Power

## Authority

## Honor

**APPENDIX D**  
**WEEK FOUR: JOURNAL III,**  
**AND POST TEST SURVEY RESULTS**



### **Journal III**

#### **What does “moving on” mean to you in reference to your pain?**

##### **PARTICIPANT 1:**

Moving on has proven to be freedom for me. It has allowed me to know what it mean to trust God and forgive myself for being in a state of none deserving for so long. Moving on and upward has helped me to grow and trust God with everything. As the word tells us to give thanks in all things, well that is what moving on is all about. Letting go of the past and with God’s help becoming alive and well again. Moving on has also allowed me to help others in their progress of getting better. I must say that moving on is not always easy to do, but it does help when you talk to God, family and friends. Moving on can sometime take a minute to pick up the pieces and start moving. Letting go can sometimes be what can seem to be a repeat of what you are moving on from. This cannot always be done on your own. For me, talking through my pain, my anguish and my hurt, took a while. I remember thinking that moving on would cause me to relive my painful experience all over again. Little did I know that if God put us through a painful experience, the He would walk with us all the way. If only we would trust Him. God is true to His word. He will take care of you and me. We only have to let Him have His way in our lives. Our father God is the answer. Thank you God for your love.

##### **PARTICIPANT2:**

No contribution made on this part of the process.

##### **PARTICIPANT 3:**

For me, moving on means that I truly embrace what has happened to me and use the painful experience to live out God’s call on my life. I must admit that some experiences have been more painful than others so embracing what happened at the time was not done with quickness. For the abusive relationship it has been 24 years since it happened. But not seeing the person ever again and leaving the area made it easy for me to move through to the other side. When I was in the situation, I could not see it but God orchestrated the entire plan of escape. This experience is one that I don’t want to ever relive; however, it has allowed me to minister to others who find themselves in this type of relationship. With the death of my grandmother, I did not quickly embrace her death and I did not acknowledge what I was feeling. As a caregiver, I was so worried about my mother that I forgot to care for myself in the process. It was not until one day I realized that I was allowing grief to control my life. I was crying at the drop of a hat; making excuses for not hanging out with friends; and sleeping excessively. I was only able to move through this painful experience with much prayer and therapy. Today, I can say that I have moved on and I can talk about it without feeling a sense of sadness. As fragile vessels, I believe we are just like Humpty Dumpty but our God is able to put us back together as whole vessels each time we find ourselves broken into little pieces.

#### **PARTICIPANT 4:**

It is now clear to me that “moving on” does not mean literally forgetting. The loss of my son should not hold my future hostage, but rather I can have enjoyable and fulfilling future despite the loss, and I actually began the process of engaging the future positively relatively quickly. Within two years of the loss, God brought me to the point where I could talk to young people about the deadly dangers of drinking and driving. I addressed a graduating class of post secondary students whom I had taught and counseled, and I was genuinely surprised at the facility with which I was able to approach the topic. From that time forward, I knew that God wanted me to use my experience to the benefit of others, but He also wanted me to pursue life differently. He wanted me to get more involved in the church, and by extension more involved with mankind. My son’s death was my most devastating time, but it became a very enlightening time as well.

#### **PARTICIPANT 5:**

That you no longer dwell on it allowing it to continue to manifest in your life weighing you down. It no longer an open wound but a healed scar that is there but no longer hurts. I have let go and let God come into my life to guide me. I’m on my way to wholeness again. I have to put the experience in the proper perspective and it no longer causes me pain. I have refocused my time and energy and thought process. The grieving over the experience has passed and is over. I have healed from that experience.

#### **PARTICIPANT 6:**

Moving on means that I have confronted my pain, acknowledged my pain and I am dismissing my pain. I have decided that my pain experience no longer controls me or my emotions. It means that I have turned it all over to God and refuse to look back or re-live the experience. This has been challenging for me because I think I’m over my pain and one similar experience draws it to the surface once again. For me, part of my pain is that I never had the chance to look at my sources of pain and say what I felt. It has been suppressed and set aside, believed to be forgotten about but only pushed down. I had strong family support but it wasn’t talked about to the point where I felt as though I had closure. So I moved on and it didn’t get talked about (not really). Moving on I want to have a peaceful spirit, a restful spirit resolving a working through my pain to the other side. There is a song I remember that stayed on my mind almost daily, “When you dream with a broken heart, waking up is the hardest part”. Stopped re-playing that song in my head and latched on to nobody greater. I haven’t moved on completely but it sure feels good to be headed in God’s direction for my life. I know when one goes away, another pain experience will find me. It’s called growth, its called life. Learning how to live on God’s terms. That is what I am working toward. Being able to talk to God or someone He places in my life will make all the difference. Talk it out, and then walk it out.

#### **PARTICIPANT 7:**

Moving on means to assess the situation, both from a biblical and realistic aspect, determine if there’s anything I did to cause the situation, and see if there’s anything I can do to rectify the situation and then do it. I have to be responsible and own my part in whatever situation I’m in.

That's being responsible and grown. Take a deep breath, be courageous, find a scripture and hold onto it. If I didn't do anything to cause the situation, and it's a waiting situation, I have to accept the good and the bad of it continue to pray and trust God with the outcome. I have to ask for His will to be done with help to bear it. Moving on means to forgive whoever needs to be forgiven. In order for me to be free of whatever may be holding me back from my future, if it is unforgiveness, I have to ask God for strength to forgive, and in faith, forgive that person. That's why I didn't mention my 26 year marriage in my pain journal, because of all I went through, I was able to forgive my ex. I may use those experiences to share with others, but that part of my past doesn't bother me and no one can use it against me. Moving on from my pain experience means to visualize how I want my future to look, no matter how unfathomable it may seem right now. No matter if someone else would agree with my design (because I have refrained from visualizing, wondering if I or my vision will be acceptable). When you begin to implement your vision, you're making decisions. I have always been afraid of making those decisions because it meant that I would have to say "no" to some things or people. I didn't want to appear to be aloof or snooty, so I pretty much went along with the program or kept my opinion to myself. But I can't live for others and they can't live for me. So the questions are: Do I accept the vision? Do I think I'm worth it? What do I have to do to get there? That's where the work comes in. The planning. Actually putting the rubber to the road. Not being afraid to try. The old cliché of, "If you don't like yourself, who else will?" got tired real quick. But if I actualized myself and started expressing myself appropriately (which I don't do always), I might actually begin to like myself and others might too. And if they didn't, well, at least I know my position. If other information is available for me to consider and change my point of view, then that's good. But with the information I currently have, I have to go along with my decision/opinion and not be afraid or ashamed of it. Moving on does mean for me to actually sit down, write out a plan and implement that plan. Sitting down forces me to look at myself and actually commit to myself that I will execute the plan. I haven't done that. I'm still afraid of the results. I guess I'm not afraid of the same old, same old. There's a big part of me that just wishes someone (the right one) would hold me and tell me everything will be all right, then I feel that I could go on. But I don't have that. So I don't start. It's a feeling of aloneness. Unfortunately, this is a personal process. I think I'm waiting for someone to rescue me. So silly. Oh well, at least it's here in black and white, and I can see what I'm doing to (not doing for) myself. How much time will it take? Will it work? If it (my plan) doesn't work, will I be able to think of an alternative and implement that? Then another real impediment is with all my doing, am I being humanistic and not doing God's will? Gosh, do I have to wait to hear from God too? How long will that take? Why am I in a rush? Is it because of my age? I just don't know how things will turn out. But what I am essentially doing is nothing. Which leads me back to the place of depression and hopelessness. I guess I do wonder if what I do (if I implement my vision) will make a difference, to anyone. I guess there's that need to be accepted and acknowledged. I didn't get enough nurturing as a child because my older brother had childhood diabetes. It wasn't my mother's fault. She was dealing with a philandering husband, trying to keep a roof over our heads and money in the bank, and trying to be a good Christian. A person can only do so much. But this theme of lack of necessary nurturing seems to come up in a lot of my situations. I can't keep blaming my lack of nurturing on my lack of forward movement. Once I've recognized the problem, I need to find the solution. I read a daily book of *Affirmations for the Inner Child*. It's very insightful. But I still need that hug. I ask God and have to trust that He'll provide the right person with the right touch to give me that hug that I need. Hugging myself is very ineffective. I guess, if I would sit down and shut out the

world, write in a journal some goals, the pros and cons of those goals, and the method to reach those goals, I would be much more successful and feel better about myself. I don't know that I've ever been settled. Certainly not in my marriage because there was no security there. And with children (Jordan specifically) and my engagements, I'm not home a lot. But I have to know how I would like my life to look so that I'm not constantly running around, catering to others, accomplishing nothing of substance or meaning. Sure, some of what I do does matter, but how do I feel about it. Can I say "no" and be OK? I can, actually. I just feel empty most times. I need connection. There has to be some order, some rest and peace. I'm not good at that. But at least I know (part of) the problem and can begin to work on it.

#### **PARTICIPANT 8:**

Moving on means being able to look back on painful experiences and not feel hurt or disappointed. It means being able to see the blessing in the pain and realizing I am a better person for having experienced it. It also means that the thought of the sting of pain is no longer fearful. But knowing that any future pain will be short lived and, most likely, won't kill me, gives me the strength to keep moving forward and experiencing new things knowing that God is in control. Moving on means "pressing on toward the mark of the High calling".

#### **PARTICIPANT 9:**

Putting painful experiences behind and learning from them and not reflecting in bitterness or suffering painful experiences within myself but going forward and moving in wholeness.

#### **PARTICIPANT 10:**

It means forgiving myself of what has happened. It must be accepted as fact. Forgive the situation or persons connected to the pain. As a Christians person I am obligated to forgive others as I desire t have my sins forgiven on a daily basis. Also some people are so very headstrong puffed up with pride that they are never wrong in how they treat you, thus by default improperly shift it as it must be your problem. Moving on for me means I must forgive, however, I have a choice to or not to fellowship with persons who possess a dark spirit, and what fellowship does darkness and light really have in common away really in all honesty (nothing).

#### **PARTICIPANT 11:**

Embracing what has happen to you. Seeking what the lesson is in that painful experience and then using the suffering from the pain as a stepping stone to share your testimony to walk someone else through the pain. Moving on should be a triumph, not tribulation

#### **PARTICIPANT 12:**

Moving on with my life is God's way of showing me that he is here for me and He will help with taking care of this depressed person without it being transferred to me. He has shown me that I truly have to focus on me and leave the other job to him. I have joined a Senior Group, have worked at the polls and have become involved in other civic groups in my community. Forgiveness is good for me, it lowered my blood pressure, less aches and pains, sleep well and

strengthened me spiritually. Thank you Reverend Campbell for the opportunity to participate, may God continue to bless you.

### **PARTICIPANT 13:**

Moving on to me was like a new life; a new person was revealed and took shape, for once in my life with God I felt empowered, by his grace, I set-up a plan for moving forward. I applied for part-time job and within months, I purchased my very first used car luxury with the help of my cousin. I could have gotten a new car or something even bigger but a car was on my need list and I believe you have to crawl before you can walk and I did not want to stretch out too far and bite off more than I could chew. I was doing a lot of over-time on my full-time job and I quit my part-time job for a few months. Then my car started to give me problems and I had to get a muffler and brakes done. It was just about paid for when the heater core went out. That was the day I traded it in for a newer used car, and the Lord blessed me again with another part-time job at the dealership. I have never reverted back to the bondage of fear that keeps me from standing on my own two feet and my faith in God is stronger and I have freedom from this painful experience because of God in my life. With God in my life the pain becomes a growing pain and I am no longer a victim of my circumstances. I still feel the pain but, I know how to move on by letting God be God in my life.

## POST TEST SURVEY RESULTS

Code No: **Post Test**

Dear Respondents:

I am currently conducting a survey on Pain Experiences as requirement for my post graduate studies. Be assured of anonymity and confidentiality with the treatment of the data you provide me. Thank you.

Elijah Campbell

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### PAIN EXPERIENCES SURVEY

#### Part I: Participant's Profile

**Instruction: Put a check mark on the blank corresponding to your personal information**

1. Age

- a. \_\_\_\_\_ 20-39
- b. \_\_\_\_ 9 \_\_\_\_ 40-59
- c. \_\_\_\_ 4 \_\_\_\_ 60-79
- d. \_\_\_\_\_ 80 and above

2. Gender

- a. \_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_ male
- b. \_\_\_\_ 10 \_\_\_\_ female

3. Highest Educational Attainment

- a. \_\_\_\_\_ High School
- b. \_\_\_\_ 1 \_\_\_\_ Associate Degree
- c. \_\_\_\_ 9 \_\_\_\_ College Degree
- d. \_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_ Post Graduate Degree

4. Pain Profile

- a. When did you experience hurts, disappointments, or felt hopelessness in your life ?
  - \_\_\_\_ 8 \_\_\_\_ within the last 3 years
  - \_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_ within the last 5 years
  - \_\_\_\_ 1 \_\_\_\_ within the last 10 years

\_\_2\_\_ more than 10 years ago

b. What is/was the source of your pain experience ? (you may have more than 1 answers)

\_\_6\_\_ Death of a love one

\_\_3\_\_ Loss of a job

\_\_6\_\_ Divorce/Broken relationship for various reasons

\_\_2\_\_ Physical Illness

\_\_4\_\_ Financial Crisis

\_\_3\_\_ Others, pls specify challenges in work and personal relationship

c. How often do you think about your painful experience

\_\_7\_\_ almost everyday

\_\_4\_\_ occasionally

\_\_2\_\_ rarely

\_\_\_\_\_ never

d. Have you at some point experienced manifestations which you think are caused by your painful experiences ?

\_\_9\_\_ yes

\_\_1\_\_ no

\_\_3\_\_ not sure

if your answer is yes, how would you describe this manifestations ?

\_\_4\_\_ sleeplessness

\_\_3\_\_ indulgence (such as : overeating, oversleeping, shopping, exercising, etc)

\_\_7\_\_ loss of interest

\_\_3\_\_ avoidance (such as not wanting to be around people, missing worship services and other church activities)

\_\_2\_\_ blaming God

\_\_2\_\_ blaming self and/or other people

\_\_2\_\_ others, specify \_\_\_\_\_

## Part II: Pain Experience

**Instruction:** Check on the space that corresponds to the option that best applies to you. The response options are

**Strongly Agree** – statement is acceptable to you 100% of the times

**Agree** – statement is acceptable to you 80% or more of the times

**Not Sure**

**Disagree** – statement is unacceptable to you 80% or more of the times

**Strongly Disagree** – statement is unacceptable to you 100% of the times

Pain Experience Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. Life's suffering makes an individual a better person.	7	5	1		
2. When life is at its worst, I know that the best is about to begin.	7	4	2		
3. Failures open doors to success	7	6			
4. What's coming is always better than what was	6	7			
5. There is always something good that the painful past brings	5	8			
6. God allows His children to be tempted by Satan through painful experiences	5	6		1	1
7. A painful experience is a blessing in disguise	5	6	2		
8. God is definitely not in painful experiences		2		6	5
9. God allows painful experiences to bless us	7	6			
10. A painful experience is a hindrance to life and joy		3		5	5
11. All solutions to problems can be found in the bible	10	3			
12. When I am in pain, I know that God understands if I miss worship services	2	4	1	6	
13. It is fine to isolate myself from Christian friends when I am in pain.		2		8	3



14. Frequently talking about our pains is helpful	3	5	2	3	
15. The first to know about my pains is my spouse (or my best friend as may be applicable)	2	6		5	
16. It is possible to be completely healed from painful experiences	4	7		2	
17. There is always a part of our painful experiences which will continue to haunt us	3	5	5		
18. I feel that I had been a victim of a painful past	2	7	5		
19. I can freely talk about my painful past without feeling any hurt at all	3	7		2	1
20. Because of my painful experiences, I consider myself victorious	4	9			

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